

Music & Letters

A Quarterly Publication

Price Five Shillings

Vol. VII. No. 2

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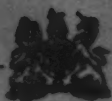
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THE FINANCIAL PROBLEM OF NATIONAL OPERA

BY THE PEOPLE FOR THE PEOPLE

Let me make one all-important point clear at the outset. In setting forth the following scheme for the establishment of grand opera in this country on a paying basis I myself would only consent to co-operate in the carrying out of that scheme on one condition, namely, that I receive no payment or financial consideration of any sort or kind for my services. Fortunately, as the result, be it noted, of my successful management of English opera in the past, during a career extending over forty years, I am now in a position of financial independence. Without being a millionaire, my financial needs are satisfactorily provided for to the end of my days and hence I am now able to approach the question without thought of any personal axe to grind or any ulterior aims whatever save the good of the cause.

So much being understood I pass to my main theme—the establishment of English opera on a paying basis and the means by which this may be brought about; in doing which I would only say by way of preface, in the words of the poet, that

"If I laugh at any mortal thing
'Tis that I may not weep."

Truly the provision of grand opera in this country hitherto has partaken largely of the nature of tragi-comedy. For while the fixed

idea has got itself established on the part of both the purveyors on the one hand and the public on the other that the thing cannot be done upon an ordinary commercial basis—that is to say, without some outside financial assistance in the nature of a subsidy (an idea which I unhesitatingly declare to be totally erroneous)—the one element in the problem which is of vital and fundamental importance, namely, the financial side of the matter, is that which has received the least attention of all! Which is only another way of saying that those who have addressed themselves in the past to the solution of what is before everything else a business problem have too often gone to work in the most unbusiness-like manner possible and in the result have reaped the reward which might naturally have been expected.

Wherefore I welcome the opportunity of expressing my opinion on the subject and I do this as one who (1) has had some forty years' actual first-hand experience as an operatic manager; and (2) has proved the soundness of his ideas and methods in the most practical and convincing of all ways, that is to say, by making his undertakings financially successful; in which connection I recall a wise saying of George Meredith, which seems to me not inappropriate here, to the effect that a good balance at your bank is, properly considered, nothing more than "funded common sense."

And incidentally I would remark further—and the circumstance is not without significance—that, despite my long experience as a practical and successful operatic manager, this is actually the first article which I have ever been asked to write embodying the results and conclusions of that experience. Often enough I have been asked by this paper and that to express my views on opera regarded from the artistic point of view, but on the financial side, never.

Let me hasten to add that I make no complaint on that score. For I have owed too much to the support of the newspapers, without which indeed the efforts of my wife and myself would certainly have been in vain, to cherish anything but feelings of eternal gratitude to the Press. But the fact is none the less indicative of the strange way in which, in our so-called practical country, the solution of essentially practical problems is sometimes entrusted to amateurs and theorists to the exclusion of those who have actually proved themselves, as judged by the hard test of experience, capable and efficient.

Allow me to start then with an incontestable proposition. Money can exist without art, but you cannot have art, at all events not the art of opera, without money. Secondly, opera is one of those forms of enterprise for which, in this country at any rate, it is idle

to think of obtaining any support from public funds. Abroad we all know it is different and there is, I believe, not a country in Europe in which grand opera is not more or less lavishly assisted by grants in aid from public sources, a principle with which I myself thoroughly disagree. Here it is useless at any rate to hope for any such assistance, and never more so, I imagine, than at the present time, having in view the sorry conditions of our national finances; and therefore such external support as may be necessary must be sought elsewhere.

But why, it may be asked, if opera can be made to pay, should any outside help be needed at all? And the question is quite natural, though the answer is perfectly obvious. You must have some preliminary capital wherewith to commence your operations, such preliminary capital being to some extent akin to the penny which the blind man puts in his cap *pour encourager les autres* and to set things going. Therefore looking away from public grants you must have recourse to private enterprise for your initial "penny in the plate" in the case of opera, though happily the amount in question need be nothing considerable for the purposes of the scheme which I am here putting forward. Or alternatively, the mere name and moral backing of a public corporation or trade union would serve the same purpose, since on the strength of this one could obtain at once from the general public the necessary initial capital.

How small a sum would serve indeed may be gathered from the simple fact that when my wife (Madame Fanny Moody) and I founded the Moody-Manners Opera Company in 1897 the total amount of capital which we had at our disposal was just £1,700—no, gentle reader, not £170,000, or even £17,000, but literally and truly £1,700—the greater part of which, I may add, we were able to pay back out of our profits to the friends who had advanced it, within twelve months. And it is in precisely the same way that, if I were entrusted with the task of establishing national opera in England at the present time, I should go to work again. Then and only then, that is to say, when the practicability and financial feasibility of the scheme have been conclusively demonstrated as the result of a year or so's working in a small way, should the public be invited to take a hand and join forces in the promotion of a more ambitious scheme.

As to the procedure to be adopted to this end, I should propose the formation of a limited liability company of 100,000 shares of 5s. each, such shares to be issued with the proviso that no single shareholder could hold more than one share. Probably only a small proportion of such an issue would be actually subscribed at first, but this would not matter, seeing that if only a quarter, say, of the total

number were taken up this would suffice for practical purposes, leaving the remainder to be subscribed at a later date when the practicability and financial soundness of the whole undertaking had been demonstrated beyond the possibility of dispute. The only difference would be that the process of development would take rather longer than would be the case if we were provided at the outset with all the capital which we required. And this might even be a blessing in disguise since "slow and sure" is the soundest of mottoes in an undertaking of this kind.

I cannot lay too much stress indeed on the necessity of beginning modestly and making good your foundations as you proceed, for this is the natural law of healthy growth and it has been in this way that all the greatest and most securely-established institutions in existence have come into being.

Take the case of the Salvation Army. Suppose that when General Booth had held his first open-air prayer meeting at a street corner some well-meaning philanthropist had come forward and given him a million pounds to play with. Do you suppose that the results would have been anything like so satisfactory as they were when the whole of that great organisation had to be built up bit by bit in the face of opposition and difficulty which served to try and test the soundness and fitness of each addition to the structure? And so it has been in the case of hundreds and thousands of other great institutions and organisations which have become solidly established through a process of steady growth and slow development from small beginnings.

Yet though all are ready to admit the truth of this in the case of ordinary institutions, such as great commercial businesses, and so forth, it seems curiously difficult to get people to understand that we must go to work in precisely the same way if we would build wisely and firmly in the case of opera also. There is no rule or principle applicable in the case of the building up of a great commercial undertaking which cannot be shown to apply equally in respect of the growth and development of an operatic company. Some of the analogies are indeed curiously close.

I presume it is not, for instance, from their most costly silks and satins, which might be likened to the "Tristans" and "Meistersingers" of grand opera that Messrs. Selfridge and Messrs. Whiteley pay their handsome dividends, but from the cheap artificial silk stockings and Russian boots without mentioning the bargain department, which are the equivalent of such works as "Maritana" and "The Bohemian Girl" in the operatic repertoire. And so in the case of the Moody-Manners Opera Company our success, too, in

the final reckoning, all came also from artificial silk and Russian boots—I beg pardon! I should say from “The Bohemian Girl” and “Maritana.”

And yet one finds that other companies which occupied the field, unfortunately without achieving financial success, since we retired, namely, since 1916, are so sublimely ignorant of the economics of their business that they positively pride themselves, while lamenting the fact that they cannot conduct their operations at a profit, upon not having played either of those two truly popular operas, or any other light operas of their type!

And this brings me to my next point, namely, the fundamental requisites for the successful management of grand opera. In my judgment they are two: (1) the management must be entrusted to the absolutely unfettered control of one man only; and (2) the man in question must know his job from A to Z. These are, in my opinion, the two absolutely indispensable conditions for success, in default of which nothing else, whether in the way of commonwealth co-operation, committees of management, artistic directors, musical advisers, or what not, will avail to achieve it.

As Sir Thomas Beecham put it not long ago, running opera is essentially a one-man job, and the next question which arises therefore is—what should be the qualifications of the man chosen for the purpose? At this point I am reminded of a story of the late W. S. Gilbert who, being asked once by a lady of his acquaintance who was needing a cook if he happened to know of any one suited to her requirements rejoiced her heart by launching forth on a glowing description of one whom he described as a positively “ideal” representative of the species. But alas! when the lady asked for the name and address of the paragon in question Gilbert assumed an air of pained surprise and gravely explained: “But, my dear friend, you have misunderstood me. I thought you realised that it was to a strictly *ideal* cook that I was alluding, whose name and address I am consequently unable to furnish.” Nor will it be any easier, I fancy, to supply the name and address of the really ideal operatic manager!

Instead, therefore, I will content myself with setting forth such qualifications as I conceive to be not quite unattainable, basing my choice of them in all modesty on some at least of the attributes which I may claim to possess myself. And I do this on the ground that I can at least claim, as I have already explained, to have been myself a successful operatic manager; wherefore it may be really useful to know exactly what was my own equipment for that task.

In my judgment, then, anyone who is to undertake the business of operatic management with any hope of success should be in the

first place and as a matter of course a person of wide general culture, who is possessed further of a thorough knowledge of music and, in a lesser degree, of all the other arts that are necessarily involved in the presentation of that most comprehensive of all artistic undertakings, grand opera. Further he should not only have a knowledge of music and of the sister arts but he should also have, what does not necessarily go with such knowledge, the artistic temperament and the consequent capacity to apply his knowledge to the best purpose. At the same time he must be a thorough man of business, with good organising capacity and high-class administrative abilities, together with that "sixth sense" possessed by the great captains of industry which enables them to divine intuitively the needs of their clients and as a consequence to supply exactly "what the public wants"—in a word, the sense of "showmanship."

In the matter of character he must have, in addition to the primary virtues of integrity, industry, patience, courage and so forth, a strong personality and a will of iron, to which I am tempted to add that his position will also be enormously strengthened if he is absolutely independent financially and is able consequently to pursue unswervingly his own ideas and convictions. And last, but not least, in addition to these general qualities of character, temperament and so forth, he must have the most exhaustive knowledge of his own particular business in the purely technical sense, acquired in the only way in which such knowledge can be acquired, namely, as the outcome of the widest possible practical experience.

Thus in my own case I started with the advantage of thorough training as an operatic singer myself under the best teachers not only at home but also abroad, though in the latter connection I am tempted to say that some of my experiences in relation to Continental opera-houses were almost more useful in teaching me what should be avoided than what should be done! Then in due course I learnt my business in the chorus, beginning in comic opera (a most excellent school for the novice) and gradually working my way up through a course of minor parts until I was qualified to take more important ones and finally singing as principal, in which capacity I was before the public for so long a period that I may be excused perhaps for dwelling now at greater lengths upon that aspect of my career.

At the same time I did a vast amount of concert work, giving concerts on my own account, fulfilling solo engagements, with choral societies, and so on all over the country as well as in South Africa and America. For many years also I toured, managed and stage-managed operatic concert parties, the performances being given in costume, so that when eventually I went into the management of

actual grand opera I was (as I think I may fairly say) about as well equipped for the business as it was possible to be. And it is indeed at least as much to this circumstance, that is to say, to the very complete knowledge of the business which I had acquired in the course of my long preliminary training and experience as to any native abilities which I may possess, that I ascribe the very gratifying and exceptional amount of success which I—or rather we (for my dear wife was throughout my right-hand and alter ego)—managed to achieve.

And it is precisely on the strength of that success, admitted and not to be disputed, that I now claim the right to be heard and express my readiness to give my services, if there be any who care to avail themselves of them, for the cause which means so much as regards the future art life of the nation. And I repeat that I make this offer, not as an untried practitioner, who merely has "views" and "theories" to advance, but as one who can furnish the most convincing of all proofs, in the shape of achieved financial success, in support of the soundness of his views.

For twenty years the Moody-Manners Opera Company went up and down the country giving performances of opera in English which, I venture to say, in point of general excellence, and especially in the all-important matter of ensemble, have never been surpassed by any similar organisation before or since. Those performances we gave invariably at popular prices, that is to say, at the current provincial theatre prices, running from a sixpenny gallery to stalls ranging from 2s. 6d. to 7s., and at these prices we made them pay.

When therefore I read such things as that letter, headed "The Plight of British Opera," recently addressed to the papers by Lord Clarendon, is it surprising that I am appalled by the truly pitiable state of affairs disclosed, knowing as I do, on the strength of my own practical experience in the successful running of provincial grand opera myself, what vastly different results might have been attained if wiser managerial methods had been adopted?

Also is it surprising if, when I think upon these things, I am sometimes moved to wonder why it has apparently never occurred to any of those responsible for this sorry "plight of British opera" that they might do worse than invoke the aid of one who was as successful at this same game as they have been unsuccessful and who is ready to place his services at their disposal, or at the disposal of any other body of responsible persons willing to avail themselves of them without thought of fee or reward, free, *gratis*, and for nothing? Putting all personal considerations aside, does it not stand to reason that there is at least more likelihood of success being achieved by

one who has actually proved his efficiency in the past than by those who, however excellent their aims, have only succeeded so far in losing the money entrusted to them? I yield to no one in my desire to achieve the very highest artistic results attainable, but the point to be borne in mind is that financial exigencies and artistic ideals must always be considered in strict relation to one another if satisfactory economic results are to be achieved; and I venture to suggest that it is because this fundamental principle has been disregarded that the present "plight of British opera" has been brought about. But if those responsible for this sorry "plight of British opera" will not listen to me, I do implore them to read the following which that music lover, great philanthropist, and multi-millionaire, Mr. Otto H. Kahn, has written in a pamphlet called "The American Stage," which I have just received about his unhappy experience when founding the New Theatre in the United States in 1909. He says: "It was on the 6th of November, 1909, that the then Governor of New York, Mr. Hughes, flanked by Senator Elihu Root and the late J. Pierpont Morgan, inaugurated the New Theatre. It was an impressive and auspicious ceremony. A great gathering had assembled, including men and women distinguished in all walks of life. The most sanguine expectations seemed amply justified. Enthusiasm ran high. No theatre ever opened with such puissant financial backing as was represented by the captains of finance and industry who were the founders of the New Theatre.

"Within two years the venture, set on its way with such proud and joyous anticipations, was laid low, and the enterprise, started under such brilliant auspices, had come to an end.

"The autopsy disclosed several ailments, none of which needed to have been, or should have been, fatal, such as the size of the house, the imperfection of the acoustics, etc. The really determining cause of death was found to be malfunctioning of the heart.

"We, the parents of the New Theatre, had brought forth an idea. To live and to grow, it needed air, plain fare and avoidance of pampering. We enclosed it in a gorgeous abode of brick and mortar, we stifled it with heavy golden raiment, we fed it on a diet seasoned with 'society' ingredients. We were conscious, and let the public be conscious, of its high-toned pedigree. It had been born anemic. We failed to apply the right treatment against that congenital deficiency. On the contrary, we managed rather to aggravate the trouble. Its blood did not nourish the heart. And thus it languished and died.

"We had not sufficiently realised that first must be the spirit, and

then the deeds of the spirit, and then the followers of the spirit, and then only the house fitted to shelter the spirit."

And now, having said only a fraction of what I should like to say concerning the matter in its more general aspect, let me give just a rough idea of the lines upon which, in my judgment, British opera might actually be established on a satisfactory financial basis.

Having obtained our preliminary capital in the manner already explained, I should set to work on precisely the same lines as before. My first company would be small: twenty-five in the orchestra, a chorus of thirty, fifteen principals, a ballet of six, repertoire, six or eight operas, and scenery and costumes also A1, and stage management ditto. With the exception of some half-a-dozen experienced choristers, who would constitute the permanent backbone of the chorus, the rest would be engaged on the definite understanding that if they did not qualify as principals in six or eight months' time their services would be dispensed with. In this way the strongest possible inducement would be offered to all the members of the company to advance in their art, while from the managerial point of view the great benefit would result that the number of the company's principals would be steadily recruited and an additional supply of soloists trained to serve the needs of the other companies subsequently to be established.

Before this latter step was taken, however, the first company would be steadily enlarged and strengthened until it had attained a size and standard adequate to enable it to serve with efficiency the permanent needs of the most important centres, to which places its activities would eventually be exclusively restricted. By this time company No. 2 would have been built up, trained, and placed upon the road for the service of the less important towns, to be followed in turn by yet a third company, similarly recruited from the parent body, and designed, of course, to visit the still smaller and less important places.

Nor would the process of development end here, for in any properly considered scheme of national opera the requirements of our kinsmen beyond the seas should also be borne in mind, and if I had any part in the management of such a scheme, properly equipped empire touring companies would constitute an essential feature of the complete organisation.

As to details of management, naturally I cannot attempt to go into such matters here, but I must find room to mention one most important point. In addition to annual incomes, pensions would be provided for every member of the company on the expiration of his or her periods of service. It may be considered strange at first that I should speak of this provision as an aid to economy, but, having gone into

the matter very thoroughly and fully with the experts of one of the largest insurance corporations in London, I believe that this would be the ultimate effect of the arrangements contemplated, bearing in mind the salaries which artists would gladly accept in return for the inestimable advantage of being assured not only of their annual incomes but also that their futures were provided for.

To return to the broader aspect of the scheme, the three or more touring companies when formed and trained would naturally join forces from time to time for the purpose of giving periodical seasons in London and, having by then established their claims to confidence and respect in the artistic sense, and at the same time demonstrated the financial soundness of the whole undertaking, one would be in a position to approach the question of a national opera house.

As to this I cannot believe that at this stage help of some sort at least would not be forthcoming from either the London County Council or the Imperial Government in the matter of land for a suitable site. Why not, for example, a small piece from the Green Park, fronting Piccadilly? And also I feel equally confident that when this stage had been reached the necessary funds for the building of the house would be readily obtained from either public or private sources, especially when it was understood that such an opera house once erected would easily be made to pay its way. To erect the present headquarters of the Y.M.C.A. £250,000 was obtained without difficulty, and equally large sums have been forthcoming from time to time for the Salvation Army, the Polytechnic, and other philanthropic bodies. Is there anything unreasonable, therefore, in the assumption that the public would be equally ready to come forward and provide the amount necessary to build a national opera house when the proper time arrived?

As to the nature of the house required it would be designed, of course, to accommodate the largest possible audiences at popular prices, say, from one shilling to six shillings, with all seats bookable. For the rest it should be provided with a stage and proscenium opening big enough to do justice to all the great spectacular operas, and at the same time capable of being reduced when necessary to meet the requirements of works demanding a less spacious framework.

I would have the orchestra and conductor concealed, as at Bayreuth, thereby giving poor Wagner a chance of having his works performed for once in a way in the manner he wished, though leaving it possible to revert to the normal arrangement of things when desired, and to accommodate in a suitable fashion the orchestra of twenty-five players only required for Mozart's "Figaro." And such a house with its contracted proscenium, would incidentally be ideal also for the presentation of Shakespeare.

As to the working of the House the three or more touring companies joined together would, as I have said, give periodical seasons, while at other times the house would be available for greater or longer periods for anyone who chose to take it, subject to the approval of the Trustees, not necessarily for opera exclusively but for any other kind of high-class theatrical production. The proceeds of such lettings being available for the furtherance of grand opera. And in these days when the demand for theatres in London is always in excess of the supply—wherefore such preposterously high rents prevail—not the slightest apprehension need be entertained of such a house ever remaining long unoccupied when not being used by the National Opera Company.

At the same time every effort would naturally be made to ensure that as far as possible it was devoted to the purposes of opera, and to this end special inducements might be offered to leading companies from the great Continental centres—Paris, Berlin, Vienna, and so on—and also from America to visit us from time to time and give complete seasons of their own.

Here, then, and in brief is a very rough outline of my scheme, and if, for obvious reasons, I have not gone into matters at the moment in greater detail, I need hardly say that I shall be delighted to furnish further particulars to any extent desired to any responsible person genuinely interested and anxious to co-operate in a practical way for the advancement of the cause which we all have at heart.

Naturally such a scheme as I have put forward will be met with criticisms and objections, some of which I can readily anticipate.

It will be said for instance that such performances as I gave were not up to the standard required nowadays, but this I utterly deny. I maintain on the contrary that they were as good as the very best of the same class which have been given since and in certain respects (notably in the matter of the ensemble) actually better. In support of which opinion I might cite the testimony of none other than that great artist, Victor Maurel, who declared on one occasion that he had never seen performances of the same class as ours which he could praise so unreservedly.

In saying this I do not suppose he meant that our singing was actually superior to that of the Paris Grand Opera or of Covent Garden in its palmy days. I am not suggesting anything so absurd as this for a moment, although I do venture to say that a touring opera company which had such artists as John Coates and Zélie de Lussan, Philip Brozel, Ella Russell, Maria Gay, Walter Hyde, to name only half a dozen, among its regular principals for years had no reason to fear comparisons in this respect with any similar organisation, either of its own day or since.

Also it will be objected probably that my repertoire was old-fashioned and contained many works which audiences of the present day would not wish to see. But this again is based on a total misapprehension of the actual facts of the case seeing that my repertoire was in reality about as catholic and comprehensive as it could possibly be. I should like to give it here complete but that would be taking up too much space, and I will content myself instead therefore by stating merely that the operas we performed included, not only "The Bohemian Girl," "Maritana," and the like, but also such operas as "Aida," "Eugene Onegin," "Flying Dutchman," "La Bohème," "La Tosca," "Marriage de Figaro," "Master-singers," "Merry Wives of Windsor," "Rienzi," "Tristan and Isolde," which will give, I think, a sufficiently good idea of its quality and character.

To which I would add that we not only performed regularly such works as these but we actually gave the very first performances in English of many of them, including "Elijah," "La Gioconda," "Madame Butterfly," "Samson and Delilah," "Siegfried," "Der Kuhreigen," "Der Evangelimann," and others equally well known.

As to our doing also popular operas of an earlier day such as those I have mentioned—"The Bohemian Girl," "Maritana," "Martha," "Lily of Killarney," and the rest—it was precisely because we had the sense to cater for all tastes by including these that we achieved such vastly more satisfactory financial results than those which have attended the operations of our successors. Those who scoff at the inclusion of such works only show indeed their ignorance of the manner in which any opera with any claim to be genuinely national and representative and popular must necessarily be run.

In Germany for instance such old-fashioned works as "Zar und Zimmermann," "Lurline," "Trompeter von Sakkingen," "Martha," and the like, are performed regularly as a matter of course in all the opera houses, side by side with those of later date, and in the French, Italian, and other opera houses throughout Europe precisely this system is followed; and for the best of reasons, namely, because there is always a large section of the public which likes to hear these old works and whose money is just as acceptable in the box-office as that of anyone else!

And so it was with us. Indeed it was by means of the money which I obtained from these humbler operas that I was able to put on others of higher artistic value. In other words I gave "The Bohemian Girl" on Saturday night in order to pay for "Tristan" on Tuesday, and those, therefore, who sneer at such works and advocate their elimination from the repertoire simply show that they do not understand the ABC—or, as I might rather put it, the LSD—of the business.

Further, it may possibly be urged that on one occasion, namely, in May, 1904, when I did give a season in London at Drury Lane, and advertised it as national English opera the result was not financially successful. This is perfectly true, and as I myself publicly stated the facts at the time I certainly have not the least desire to conceal them now. I lost in point of fact some £5,000* in the course of that season, which was unfortunately prejudiced by many circumstances amply sufficient to account in part at least for its non-success. Thus, I was practically compelled to give it up in May and June when it had to face direct competition of Covent Garden. Further, I could not at that time get the additional orchestral players whom I required; I could not play certain operas; and in various other ways I was hopelessly hampered and handicapped.

But in any case, what I wish to point out is that the success or failure of that particular season really has no bearing whatever on the matter now in question, as I was merely experimenting.

The point which I wish to dwell upon, and which really has a bearing on the present issue, is that I was enabled to give this experimental season in London, and to withstand the loss which it entailed, solely by reason of the very different financial results which were always attending my operations in the provinces. There was nothing remarkable at all in losing money over English opera in London; the same thing had been done too often before. What really was remarkable and significant was that I was able to get back all my losses, and more, out of the profits which I was making in the provinces. And the whole burden of this paper is to suggest that, given the right methods and the right man to work them, nothing would be easier than to achieve equally satisfactory results again.

One word more only in conclusion. I have said already that so far as I myself am concerned I would only consent to give my services on condition that I received no payment or consideration of any kind whatever in respect to them. To which I would only add one further condition, namely, that if my services were accepted I should be given an absolutely free hand and unfettered control (except the money) in carrying out my ideas. For grand opera management is, as I have said before, quoting Sir Thomas Beecham, essentially a one-man job, and on no other terms can it be carried on successfully.

CHARLES MANNERS.

* Drury Lane ran for seven weeks at a weekly loss of £700; but we easily made this loss up in the provinces.

A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF INDIGENOUS FORMS OF OPERA*

WHAT is indigenous opera?

Questions of national origin are fraught with difficulties and complexities, and the origin of the art of a nation is yet more difficult of analysis. Of all forms of art perhaps the much debated one of opera is the least readily assigned to the country of its birth. It would be possible indeed to make out an interesting case for the theory that mixed parentage is essential to opera. Our apologist would point out that Gluck, himself of Teutonic birth, had to graft the Italian tradition on to the art of France to produce what was in many ways the most successful experiment in opera ever made, while the Italian operatic tradition itself was the outcome of the drama of Greece wedded to Italian song. He would point to the influence of Isidora Duncan on the Russian ballet, and he would be able to claim in support of his thesis Mozart himself, who by bringing to the form of Italian opera the harmonic depth of German symphonic music gave us works of unsurpassed musical beauty.

Again it would be interesting to students and to those musicians who love to speculate whence comes their art, to trace dramatic music to its ritual origin, to lose ourselves in the mazes of Plutarch and Aristoxenus in an effort to reconstruct the music of Greece, to trace the music of the troubadours or to disport ourselves at the court masques of Louis XIVth.

I have not attempted to trace the first beginnings of dramatic music or to study the modifications which in later times the free intercourse of nations inevitably produced. I have chosen rather, since our concern is with the opera of our own day, to put together some thoughts on types of opera as they stand in our modern repertory, to try and understand in what way they are the growth of their countries as we know them: indigenous, since they are of the soil and of the people. In what way are these operas, loved as they are by the peoples from whom they come and pointed to proudly as a national heritage, characteristic of the land of their origin, in their characters, their plots, their construction, in the music itself? How

* This essay was placed second by the adjudicators of the prize given last year.—[Ed.]

has the national temperament resolved the troublesome equation of the relation between the arts that forms our problem? What influence has the language played in their structure?

Turning to Italy first, these ridiculous Figaros, Leporellos and Gianni Schicchis, these hot-headed Othellos and Manricos and Rigolettos, the intrigue and war of wits over small occurrences, the scenes of jealousy and violent passion, have they a counterpart in Italian life of to-day? Assuredly they have. The iniquitous and delightful Gianni Schicchi waits for us in the cab outside the Duomo. Figaro attends us in every café running with an armful of dishes: "Pronto signore. Subito signora. Buon giorno signorina. Vengo subito." Figaro qui, Figaro qua; Figaro li, Figaro la! Leporello dogs our footsteps up the mountains to tell us of the dangers we shall encounter; "Pericolo signora, grande pericolo." (He shakes at the knee.) "Dormire alla montagna" (chattering teeth). "Tuona, boum boum." He has a boat upon the lake and will row us to a place of safety, all for a few lire, with this fine piece of acting thrown in!

The conflict in Italian plays is largely a conflict of will and human passion; love and jealousy inspire Rigoletto, Trovatore, Aida and all the most popular operas of the Italian stage; the drama is between personalities heightened by passion. The heroes and villains are of one stuff, dramatic, sensational in their emotions and in their movements, commanding attention with a gesture, a bold figure of speech, or by sudden action; the stuff that Mussolini and D'Annunzio are made of, that has made the heroes and villains of Italian history. The drama affects the musical tradition. The play must develop quickly, there must be movement—*movimento*, word beloved of the Italian—action, speed: symphonic development arrests the action and has therefore little place. Love and hate are simple emotions and they belong to individuals; hence individual song will dominate the opera. Song, individual song, physical joy in singing, warmth and sun overflowing into roulades and runs for sheer delight: this sensation of singing is of the people and the land; the florid songs of these tenor heroes with the poise, the sense of vocal balance that redeems their poor harmonies, are of the same stuff as the improvisations you may hear in the cafés and the olive orchards or at night on the Lung 'Arno as they thrum the latest canzone from Naples on their guitars. The play will break into an exuberant song at its highest moments; the action will be swift, yet it will suffer itself to be held up for song because song makes its own conventions and the emotions of the audience are quick to respond. The great moment has come; the play has led up to it; let us prolong it if we can, cling to it, roll it out, even encore it—our emotions are quick in the south. But the moment must be the right one dramatically, and

here the Latin instinct for the dramatic in speech and action seldom fails. The climax of *Rigoletto*, where his voice is heard off the stage in his mocking aria is only one instance of this superbly chosen melodrama.

Turning to Germany, we find that the humour of the people has less to tell us. We have a peasant people, naturally grave, with a heavier, slower humour, easily amused by clumsiness or practical joking as men are whose lives are a fight against physical conditions. Humour in Wagner's operas peeps out rarely. *Die Meistersinger* attempts a musical humour of a new kind, Beckmesser's furious scoring of faults during the *Preislied*, the debates of the old singers, the watchman left solitary after the turmoil of the night proclaiming all's well, are admirable, but such moments are rare and the action moves too slowly to be favourable to wit, the essence of which is swiftness.

On the serious side of the German character a new dramatic element comes in. Nature to the Latin races is a background to man's activity, a garden for him to play in, a theme to moralise upon. Contrast the lyric poetry of Italy with that of Germany and this difference of attitude becomes clear. To the German, nature is more than this; it is one with his mood; it is symbolic, identified with himself. This identification becomes clearer in music: it is the force of "Die Schöne Müllerin," of "Aufenthalt," and a large number of Schubert's best songs; it inspires Brahms still more directly in "Feldeinsamkeit"; it is met with in a naïve form in the folk-songs of the Tyrol, in references to the mountains, the violets, the stream and, over and over again, to May, the singing of the birds, the bursting of buds, the miracle of the northern spring. The further sense of awe of unknown and primeval things seems born of the mountains, the rugged hills and treacherous seas, the mountaineering and shepherd and Viking ancestry. Wagner catches the mood of nature in a phrase as surely as Schubert himself. It is Wagner who comes back to one over and over again in this mountain country; the "Wald-weben" with the pattern of the sunlight on the leaves, Siegfried stepping out through the fire ("Selige Oede auf wonnigen Höh'n") on the mountain top as one emerges from the clouds which cover the lower slopes on to the soft alpine pasture, bathed in sunlight.

It is Wagner, with his amazing psychological instinct, who realised that the element of conflict which comes in between man and great primeval forces or desires, man caught up by fate too strong for him, has dramatic and musical possibilities on a great and tragic scale. These German operas, alien as they may appear to be to the classic spirit, have more in common with the tragedies of Greece than that

opera which was founded in Italy in the days of the Renaissance. All, from *The Ring* to *Tristan*, are dominated by this sense of fate. For here we have a field in which opera can give us what no one art can. Music is an art of association; our joy in music is bound up with recognition of phrases and harmonies in ever-changing relationship. In such a way, psychologists tell us, is that other strange music in our souls which lies beyond conscious thought made up. And music can strike down through what is happening about us, through our speech and our actions and our lives and touch these associations. By this means opera transcends the limitations of speech. Coleridge points out that speech cannot present two ideas simultaneously. Music is free as thought. Music, combined with poetry and drama, knows no limitations of time. While the action on the stage, while the actual words sung are fixed in time, music can touch our memory of the past or warn us of the future. It can make a new form of dramatic irony by contrast with the serenity of actual events. It touches that double personality that is within us all and which came so strangely to consciousness during the war, to men doing alien work with half their minds, while their souls were far away. It is useless to blame Wagner for his length: associations gather their force from repetition, and the music gathers memories, until at the end of the work these themes come back to the listener as from his early life. The force of Siegfried's "Erzählung," or the "Passage down the Rhine," the whole astounding end of *Götterdämmerung*, would be lost if it were not for the wealth of memory behind it. The music may call up a mass of conflicting memories as in *Götterdämmerung*, or as in *Tristan* be one overwhelming stream. In each case it is something that symphonic music alone can express.

The characters of the Wagnerian opera will be types, rather than the net dramatic figures of the Italian, the subjects will be treated in their universal rather than their individual aspect, the orchestra will reign supreme. The German opera differs from the Italian in the whole angle from which it is approached, and the difference is national and fundamental.

A brief glance at Russia and the Slav nations shows us two things, both reflected in their music. The most striking perhaps is the living sense of the past. Limits of time seem far less to the Slav mind; limits of distance correspondingly greater. The western imagination leaps readily from America to India, from the North Pole to the Tropics; it moves slowly among the images of the past. The Slav mind, long cut off from outside contact, nourished on its own history and its own sufferings, dwells in the past familiarly. Almost any Serbian family can trace its descent back through countless generations; his Slava or Feast commemorates not his own birthday but the day on which his

ancestors embraced Christianity: the very embroidery on the clothes of the peasants is symbolic of national history. This history sense comes out in such operas as *Boris*, a presentation in short scenes of a subject known to everyone, a chronicle play in music.

The second characteristic is the collective instinct of the Slav peoples. This manifests itself in their singing, their dancing; they have that quality which has its origin deeper than any amount of team work can make them, in something akin to the flight of birds, which one can only call communal consciousness. I recently questioned a Russian friend whether it was true that the Soviet orchestras play without conductor, since it would seem that such a procedure far from inducing, as our informant maintained, a greater freedom and spontaneity, would lead to stereotyped expression. Her answer was that she did not believe it would be so since the power of Russians for corporate feeling far exceeded that of any western nation. Such a spirit makes *Khovantchina* unique; the protagonist here is not one hero but the whole unit of the Old Believers; the interest and even the action lies with the chorus. Add to this the love of decoration and sense of colour inherited from the East and you have the elements of Russian opera, more directly of the nation even than those which we have already examined.

And now the burning question of England and the English opera. What have we in common with these countries; what is our own heritage?

We share with the Italian a sense of fun in everyday life. French critics have said that they admired the humour of English above all its qualities; for humorous description, for human comedy no language can equal it. Our humour has not the reckless pace of the Italian, but humour may be more readily treated in music than wit. Wit stands outside a situation. Wit in music of the kind that some of the moderns have given us, soon tires; it robs music of that directness which is its greatest asset.

There is, I believe, a type of musical humour to be found in our modern English opera which is of a different quality to anything we have yet had. Parody has always come easily to the English mind, the parody that is sympathetic, admiring of the qualities it characterises, but yet will not allow itself to be swept away. This feeling for parody comes out freely in the modern English opera. Holst's "The Perfect Fool" is made up of it; Nicholas Gatty's subtle and delightful mock madrigal in "Prince Ferelon" or the air "Fair lady my happy privilege . . ." are delightful instances of it. The sense of musical humour which consists of using musical associations to comic effect shows itself even where no parody is present; the folk dances in Holst's "At the Boar's Head" throw off their Kensington airs and

swagger finely among their tavern associates; Vaughan Williams has some wonderfully happy uses of them in "Hugh the Drover."

In our serious mood we can trace the kinship to the northern races. Nature is to us as to the Germans a reality, perhaps the reality, but the English sense is far more instinctive and less intellectualised. On the one hand these qualities which are perhaps of Celtic origin—that sense of other-worldliness, wistful, delicate, intensely shy of words and definitions, the restless spirit perpetually driven on to strange adventures, to wonder-voyages, the wander-thirst which possesses us all. On the other hand, a freshness and simplicity born of a temperate climate, flowers and green fields and quiet lives. This mood more than any other runs through our national music, and unites in feeling music as widely apart as Purcell's "How Blest are Shepherds" and Vaughan Williams' "Pastoral Symphony." Not dramatic, one would say, but yet, contrasted with the restless adventuring spirit, what stuff for music!

The material for dramatic conflict in the national character has not been half fully used. Who will give us an opera of the sea and the longing for the sea that Masfield and Conrad have expressed for us in literature? Vaughan Williams has shown us what he can do with sea music in the "Sea Symphony," Stanford has touched on the heroic and human side, Ethel Smyth on the humorous in "The Boatswain's Mate," but the opera with the sea as dominating force running through it has yet to be written. Boughton touches the mystic side of us in "The Immortal Hour." The quite amazing success of this opera, in spite of the lack of action, and obscurity of the first act,* and of any element which one could predict as popular, lies in the universality of the response to the fairy call, the fact that this conflict is in the soul of the nation, between Celt and Saxon, between adventure and security, between dream and fact. "Hugh the Drover" will grow popular and live for the same reason, that it has a universal theme, for the theme of the open road is English to the heart; the call of the country to the town, the vagrant in us all—one only wonders that a hundred operas have not been written on it instead of one. The mood of the earlier "Songs of Travel" matured and mellowed runs through it. When Vaughan Williams speaks folk music it touches national recollection and strikes deep down into our race consciousness, for here for the first time we hear it spoken not as an archaic language but as a living expression of our contemporary thought.

* Some of the obscurity of "The Immortal Hour" lies in the fact that the libretto, like much English and a good deal of Celtic poetry, is laden with imagery. The object of imagery is to intensify the original idea. Music is its own imagery and the effect of the double image is almost always lost—not only lost, but it obscures both poetry and music.

The new impulse towards fashioning song in our own language may lead us yet into new and unexplored paths. The old opinion was that English was unsingable. The spoken language in Italian is characterised by a rising in pitch and gradual crescendo to a sudden drop which is fairly closely represented by the Italian recitative with its gradual rise and close on the drop of a fourth. The inflexion of German tends on the other hand to a rise and crescendo to a climax in the *middle* of the sentence. Wagner, exaggerated and unnatural as the effect often is, follows this natural tendency more closely than is usually recognised. Compared with these, English shows very little inflexion, and what there is tends to drop in pitch and intensity at the end of the sentence. On the other hand no language shows such variety of accent and rhythm; in the interplay of metrical and speech accent which makes the beauty of our poetry, in the minute variations of stress that often change the whole meaning of a sentence, it is unique. The madrigalists did not attempt to copy inflexion, but they used the rhythmic attributes to perfection. Freedom as to inflexion allows a more melodic invention; the melody tends to supply the formal element while the rhythm is set free. Holst in "At the Boar's Head" and Gatty in "Prince Ferelon" have experimented along these lines in their recitatives, and the possibilities of rhythmic invention are not yet exhausted.

Individual song dominates the Italian opera, the orchestra the German, dance and formal beauty the Russian. What is at the root of English music? I believe that the chorus and choral music are destined to play the greatest part in the shaping of English opera. From the days when England was "from end to end all singing," through the darkest pages of her musical history, the English countryside has never ceased to sing. The success of the Festival movement has shown what a power singing is in the land; the madrigalists have shown us what can be done with the "unsingable" English language; Vaughan Williams and Delius have experimented in using voices among orchestral instruments; Holst's use of unseen chorus has produced effects hitherto unknown to music. In opera we have Purcell to point the way. We have Boughton with his human scenery; the massed effect of the chorus half human, half immobilised, and music like the laughing chorus seem to show that unaccompanied voices can create dramatic atmosphere more effectively even than orchestra. The unseen chorus in "Savitri," the rollicking noisy crowd in "Hugh the Drover" belong as truly to the action as the principal characters, and are as essential to the music as the orchestra itself. This choral singing is of the people, from whom our opera must take its life. Half of the popularity of Gilbert and Sullivan lies in the fact that the people who line up for 24 hours in a queue outside the theatre have

sung in these operas themselves. Given chorus work that is vital to the opera, music of their own flesh and blood, given orchestras on less extravagant lines than the old "grand" operas considered necessary, they will sing the works of our composers, and they will crowd our opera houses to learn how they should sound.

Since the days of Greece art has become, no less than science and philosophy, specialised in a specialising age, but as in our days men's minds are turning again to a universal philosophy that shall piece together life as we know it, so they are turning towards opera and the union of the arts. As Vaughan Williams has said, the skilled professional is only the crest of the wave. Our national opera must be the crest of the wave, and must grow out of the will of the English people.

MAISIE RADFORD.

CAN OPERA BE MADE TO PAY?

For several years now, there have appeared an ever increasing number of articles dealing with opera, most of which deal with the subject as an art. These articles seem to do very little towards assisting the business side of production. In any case there is always a financial loss on all performances of opera in this country. Certainly the art problems need all the publicity which can be given them in the Press, but it cannot be said that this side suffers from any serious neglect. It is the practical problems of production, so rarely dealt with to-day, that need all the discussion they can be given. No amount of appeals for doles will in the long run assist opera. Charity is a crutch in times of distress, and must be dropped as soon as the patient is in a healthy condition.

Those of us who venture into the very risky business of producing opera, quickly find out where remedies are needed. It is the object of this article to point to the facts and show how expenses are run up to an impossible figure to-day. Mr. Colles once said "Opera is the most expensive noise known to-day." From first to last, the cause of all operatic failure is its cost. If no means can be found to reduce the costs it can never pay and will soon be relegated to the waste basket of unprofitable notions. Practical experience shows how costs could be considerably lowered and so make it possible to continue.

These reducible costs all come under various heads and we will examine each in turn. First, comes the present high cost of the orchestra. Opera requires the very greatest efficiency from the players engaged, and therefore the wages of each individual player are high. To attempt Wagner without close attention to the orchestral details would be fatal, simply because Wagner used the orchestra as the protagonist. This Wagnerian notion of things prevails everywhere to-day, so that operas are all scored for immense orchestras and very few indeed are available for small or condensed bands. Wagner intended his orchestra to be almost submerged beneath the level of the stage, while we are compelled to place our players not only on the same level as the audience, but right out in

the hall and into the auditorium. Small wonder the effects are lost and the vocal section struggling in the background are drowned in a welter of noise. In England, large theatres are rarely available for operatic productions, and in small theatres the Wagnerian conception of the orchestra is not possible owing to its cost. Worse still, under such conditions it merely becomes an inartistic noise.

First, then, it is imperative that composers should give us scores for small combinations of players. Scoring for three oboi, three flutes, three clarinets, three bassoons, four horns, &c., may be a fine thing for the heavenly choir who have to pay no rent, entertainment tax or advertisement bills—I am not sure about royalties—but it is hopeless for us here and now. In practice what happens is that we venturesome enthusiasts are compelled to "arrange" the scores and parts, hoping we shall not get caught. Experience at arranging parts teaches one a great deal about the expensive ideas of composers and how to frustrate them. The great Russian five are all offenders in this respect. Strangely enough, we know that the "mighty band" often heard their works for the first time in a Russian drawing-room, under what conditions I do not know, but one hardly supposes with full orchestral effects. If they could so reduce their scores for such performances, why should not we do so to-day? The composer can help us very considerably in this matter by giving us sets of parts for condensed orchestra. Where the composer cannot do so, the publishers might do so with advantage to themselves. A few purists will of course pine for the full score, but they can always go to Covent Garden. The general public do not care a fig, so long as what they hear pleases them, and it is they who must be cajoled into the theatre in greater numbers.

New works lend themselves to endless possibilities. "Savitri" is one of very few operas written for small combinations of players. Nothing would be gained by scoring this for full orchestra. Holst and Stravinsky have both made some experiments with the human voice as part of the orchestra, this is a very important move in the right direction. The use of the chorus by Holst is particularly interesting. As an example of the art it loses nothing while as an economy in costume it is enormous. In an opera the chorus may have several changes of costume all of which pushes up the costs very considerably. Holst has cut the costs entirely. The National Trust would do well to consider these points of decreasing the costs when they offer their promised scholarships for opera.

Another serious item in the costs is the royalty. No one wishes to deny the composer a means of living, but an unprejudiced study of the facts may be worth while. Certain older operas cost little or nothing to produce. Under some conditions no royalty can be asked.

If orchestral parts are hired a small but reasonable fee will usually be charged. Foreign operas, especially the works of the Russian composers, are mostly available at fairly reasonable rates. Twelve guineas is usually asked for six performances. Woe betide the producer who may have the cause of British opera at heart. The writer was recently asked £54 for six performances. After some bargaining on the question, a fee of £88 was agreed to, but it was our first and last attempt at English opera. Such a fee is not possible. When considering this question it should not be forgotten that, in every case where production is proceeded with, there is a sale of a number of expensive vocal scores as a matter of course. Fortunately there is no dearth of foreign works for the present at reasonable rates.

The Little Theatre movement in America had to deal with this question of royalties, and one enterprising publisher issued lists of plays at special rates to little theatre companies. Sometimes the simple purchase of a number of books carried the right to act the opera in a little theatre. At others a small covering fee was asked. That publisher says: "These plays are getting at present thousands of performances every year." This one enterprise helped considerably to make it possible to build up new companies in numerous towns, and to-day the movement is a great national concern. I offer it to composers and publishers for serious consideration. Our costs cannot pay the present enormous royalty fee. If it cannot be reduced then English opera will have to wait until the millennium and the movement will be seriously retarded.

A most curious method is employed in this country. It might be called "the brewery system." It consists of tying operas to certain appointed companies. "The Perfect Fool" by Holst, and "Travelling Companion" by Stanford, are two such examples which I have personally come across. I can quite understand the urgent need to prohibit other than certain companies performing certain operas in any given area for a short period, to avoid clashing. I cannot, however, understand the absolute refusal to allow, say Bristol, to perform a work tied up to Liverpool. What can be said in favour of such a method I do not know. Against it we can say definitely that it will seriously restrict the number of performances, the royalties, and the sale of vocal scores. Worse still, it must in the end add to the costs.

The day when it can be said that grand opera cannot be produced by amateur companies has passed. It is being done in Bristol and elsewhere. Every balance-sheet shows a serious loss. Why? Well, because the present costs are as great as the possible returns. The seating capacity of our hall is £400 for six performances at popular prices when every seat is full. We have never yet attracted

a full house. Against this figure we will put our costs as a useful study:—

	£	s.	d.
1. Rent, includes light, stewards, stage-hands	100	0	0
2. Orchestral players' wages	70	0	0
3. Royalty fee for English opera	33	0	0
4. Entertainment tax	30	0	0
5. Rehearsal room rent, costumes, scenery costs, advertising and incidentals	60	0	0
Total cost	£293	0	0

Items 1 to 4 total up to £293, out of a possible capacity figure. Considerably over half the possible takings must go to pay those four items. No. 1 is fixed and cannot be reduced. No. 2 is now at the lowest figure consistent with the real needs; if we hired the orchestra called for by the score that alone would swallow all our takings. Considering the number of vocal scores sold and the need to encourage us a little, No. 3 should read £10 or less. No. 4 makes it quite certain that opera shall not pay if the revenue people can help it. The last item is the Cinderella of the cost family. It is in the last item that we must cut in every possible way, always to the loss of the performance. In case anyone is inquisitive about the producer's fee, we merely state that he lives in hopes of sharing the royalty one day. Why do we go on in the face of such difficulties? Simply because we are certain that, with a little commonsense and with help from the people who can give it, there is a healthy future for opera.

If this help is to be given the composer is the first who should be asked to help us. We cannot plead too much with him to give us smaller scores and so reduce our costs. He will gain a great artistic advantage in the many small theatres where overpowering noise is not art, and we shall then be able to do works now impossible owing to their scoring. If he, with the publisher, will consider the present royalty fee and reduce it to a reasonable figure he will confer on us producers a boon by which both may gain. Such a concession would go far towards building up new companies in other towns. If the "tie up" system were reconsidered, the composer would soon realise that it was not for his good.

Among other items we would beg of the composer to consider the very important matter of time taken by the performance of his opera. Again, practical experience leads to the conclusion that short

one-act operas are not of much use to-day. It is a curious fact that, while no artistic reason could be given for it, to offer three operas in one night always brings not only financial loss but much adverse criticism. Two works can be done more often, but the large companies have never successfully solved the parting of the famous pair. Foreign operas are always too long for this country. As performed abroad they may be quite good, but here they must be cut to conform to the time limits. An opera must play not more than three hours with one or two intervals. The dramatist has always recognised this time law, with no loss to his artistic principle; then why should not the composer do so? In this country the composer seems to take little trouble to understand the needs of our stage. "Savitri" plays twenty-five minutes and is an ideal curtain raiser; but where is the opera of about two hours' duration which could follow it? Study of a series of English works with regard to time of performance will quickly reveal the impossibility of fitting any two or three of them for performance. If they are chosen, the producer will have to choose between two long intervals or a very short evening's run. Two or three works by one publisher are hardly to be had, and if two works by different publishers are attempted it will be bad for the costs again.

Composer and publisher may ask if any alteration will be worth while, and we reply most emphatically that it will: the public are coming more and more to opera. At every performance they are increasing in numbers. They come thinking it will be a very "highbrow" affair, and discover that in reality it is a very delightful form of entertainment. They come and they *see*; later on they come and *hear*. When they have learnt to hear, they care less about the spectacle and discover that they have learnt to listen with much more appreciation to the music of the concert room, which now they ignore. Everyone will have gained when the public are won over to opera as a regular form of theatre going, and it will be well worth their while to help in every way possible. It is often said that the Italian street urchin sings the airs of the operas just as glibly as do ours the songs of the music hall. We have heard the dressing rooms ring with the melodies of Rimsky Korsakow sung by people who a short while ago had never seen an opera. Opera is one of the greatest forces for education at our command to-day. We get over our losses by a charity system for the time being and live on faith and hope until the next performance. If the art is to have any new life it must be very clear to the enthusiast who ventures to produce that it does not mean profits for the composer and the publisher, and certain loss for himself in time and labour. They are the only three who really matter in the question of making opera pay. At

present the composers take little or no interest in any production other than enforcing the strict payment of the royalty fee, and they will write quite unnecessary letters on this subject.

Co-operation between these three might bring about some important results whenever a production is contemplated. It would be very easy to stimulate other towns to make a start at the business; while the costs stand at three-quarters of the possible takings, the thing is likely to keep a good many out of the way. The publisher argues that until the public buys his music in large quantities it cannot be produced cheaply. We reply by asking who built the great Kodak business, which to-day runs its own symphony orchestra? Not the public. It was done by creating a demand for a luxury at a very reasonable charge. When opera is put on the same business footing it will soon have as good a life as the inexpensive oratorio had. Of these two the public are more inclined to go and hear opera to-day, and it is good business to keep them interested in regular performances. The present spasmodic attempts at production spread over the country are rather apt to make the public shy of the whole thing.

Gilbert and Sullivan operas have lost nothing by their great popularity all over England. Performances can be seen in the smallest towns in the country. So popular are these works that the D'Oyly Carte Company were for a number of years able to command double prices for the seats at many theatres. They can still take many theatres for a run of two weeks, as against the grand opera company's one week. Not the least of the advantages these operas possess is the small orchestra needed. Certainly the royalty fee is rather high, but that is a small matter when one can fill a theatre at good prices for the seats.

It would not be an impossible task to raise grand opera in a few years to the same paying basis if only it can be shown to be able to pay its way at present, thereby giving encouragement to small companies to take it up in numerous towns. There is a way: and that is for the composer, the publisher and the producer to deal with it. They alone can save it. No dole or trust can ever do it for long. It can be done by *reducing the costs*.

ROBERT PERCIVAL.

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present the composers take little or no interest in any production other than enforcing the strict payment of the royalty fee, and they will write quite unnecessary letters on this subject.

Co-operation between these three might bring about some important results whenever a production is contemplated. It would be very easy to stimulate other towns to make a start at the business; while the costs stand at three-quarters of the possible takings, the thing is likely to keep a good many out of the way. The publisher argues that until the public buys his music in large quantities it cannot be produced cheaply. We reply by asking who built the great Kodak business, which to-day runs its own symphony orchestra? Not the public. It was done by creating a demand for a luxury at a very reasonable charge. When opera is put on the same business footing it will soon have as good a life as the inexpensive oratorio had. Of these two the public are more inclined to go and hear opera to-day, and it is good business to keep them interested in regular performances. The present spasmodic attempts at production spread over the country are rather apt to make the public shy of the whole thing.

Gilbert and Sullivan operas have lost nothing by their great popularity all over England. Performances can be seen in the smallest towns in the country. So popular are these works that the D'Oyly Carte Company were for a number of years able to command double prices for the seats at many theatres. They can still take many theatres for a run of two weeks, as against the grand opera company's one week. Not the least of the advantages these operas possess is the small orchestra needed. Certainly the royalty fee is rather high, but that is a small matter when one can fill a theatre at good prices for the seats.

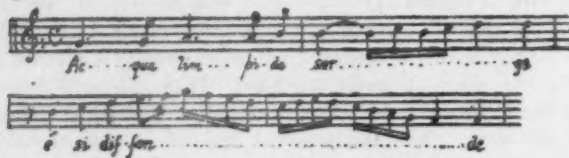
It would not be an impossible task to raise grand opera in a few years to the same paying basis if only it can be shown to be able to pay its way at present, thereby giving encouragement to small companies to take it up in numerous towns. There is a way: and that is for the composer, the publisher and the producer to deal with it. They alone can save it. No dole or trust can ever do it for long. It can be done by *reducing the costs*.

ROBERT PERCIVAL.

ITALIAN CANTATA—II

It was by writing cantatas that the composers learned to construct a scene for opera. The new taste for modulation which begins to show itself in the cantatas of Mazzochi brings about modifications in the original plan of the cantata. That of Domenico Mazzochi (for instance), on a poem by Achillini called "Testamento e Morte di San Giosseffe," keeps to the rule of the same bass for the first three stanzas, but for the fourth the musician allows himself to modulate to the dominant, which obliges him to give up his *continuo*. In all the pieces the song is constantly ornamented with *fioritura*, intended to be expressive or descriptive.

Ex. 3.



From the year 1640 is definitely established the cantata form of alternate recitatives and *airs mesurés*, but this does not prevent certain authors from practising in the old fashioned manner with more or less freedom. Benedetto Ferrari, in his second book of *Musiche e Poesie varie a voce sola* (1641), composes to the same bass five out of six stanzas of the cantata "Amante io vi so dire," which is, however, in a much advanced style. One notices very frequent changes of rhythm, and the *continuo* is written very cleverly, instead of being merely composed of long notes obstinately repeated.

Ex. 4.



Although we shall come across other cantatas of which the different couplets are written for the same bass, yet these will all be separated by recitatives. A cantata of Vergilio Mazzochi, which cannot be later than 1640, gives an example of the plan most generally adopted. The poem is by Mgr. Rospigliosi (the future pope Clement XI), who was an important figure in the history of opera and cantata as a writer of librettos. The subject of the cantata is first set forth in four verses. Disdain is going to make war against Love :

“ Sdegno campion audace,
Spiegando sua bandiera,
Non vuol più tregna,
Non vuol più pace! ”*

This first air ends with a musical development on the two last verses, which form a refrain. Then comes a recitative sung by Disdain encouraging the soul to free itself from Love's yoke :

“ Se t'invita lo sdegno,
Alma col suo furore.
Rompi quel giogo indigne.
Ah, non a core, il core,
Hor che sdegno l'avviva.”*

There follows an air in regular time (*air mesuré*) in praise of Disdain, and the refrain of the original air is repeated in conclusion :

“ Viva lo sdegno, viva,
Ch' inalzando la face,
Non vuol più tregna.
Non vuol più pace.”*

This little allegorical cantata is, in our opinion, the perfect type of the cantata as it was to flourish in the hands of the great masters of the art, Luigi Rossi, Cesti and Carissimi. Luigi Rossi was the musician who moulded and developed the new genre into the highest degree of plastic perfection. He did for the secular cantata what Carissimi was to do in the future for *The Sacred History*. Born in the kingdom of Naples in 1592, a pupil at the Conservatoire of that

* 1. Disdain (like) a bold champion, unfurling his banner—wishes no more for a truce—wishes no more for peace.

2. If Disdain invites you, your soul with its fury breaks that unworthy yoke. But, oh, not heartily, without Disdain inspiring it!

3. Long live Disdain, which uplifts the soul!

Wishes no more for a truce.

Wishes no more for peace!

city of the celebrated Flemish polyphonist, Jean de Maque, he was early acquainted with the rich repertory of the Neapolitan villanelle. Like the Roman composers, neighbours of his, when, about the year 1620 he came to live at the court of Cardinal Borghese, he seems to have had only a moderate appreciation of the new style. The first compositions of his that we have are "Arie Spirituali," and canzonette of a very definite melodic form. He soon became famous; about 1620 he entered the service of Cardinal Antonio Barberini, who was a great patron of music at the court of his uncle Pope Urban VIII. He soon became the Cardinal's favourite musician, and he was universally famous. An excellent singer, he established an academy in his house, which was frequented by the most illustrious singers of the time and by numerous other artists. It may be assumed that it was in this circle that the cantata form was evolved and afterwards developed. From thence she flies forth to conquer the world, thanks to Luigi Rossi's pupils, those great singers who were the delight of the foreign courts.

Luigi Rossi himself was called to Paris in 1646 by Mazarin, and he there caused to be represented an opera, *Orfeo*, 1647. He also gave performances of numerous cantatas, copies of which abound in our libraries. The cantatas of Rossi were sung everywhere, and Constantin Huyghens mentioned them with enthusiasm in his correspondence. Luigi Rossi was only incidentally a dramatic musician. His two operas, *Palazzo d'Atlante*, 1642, and *Orfeo*, 1647, contain admirable pages, but from one end to the other they are written in cantata style. Few traces of true dramatic feeling are to be found in them; from this point of view they are a complete contrast to the operas of Cavalli, and it is curious to notice that the latter has not left a single cantata, only operas. Cavalli was the dramatic musician, while Luigi Rossi is the absolute type of the lyric genius. Apart from that, these two musicians, who were the complement of one another, were looked upon by their contemporaries as the greatest artists of their generation. Luigi Rossi having died in 1653 we may assert that the evolution of the cantata under his influence was extraordinarily rapid, for in ten, or at most fifteen years, we pass from the rather elementary forms we have hitherto studied to those which are marvellously ingenious and of infinite variety.

The morphology of music is so little advanced that it is very difficult to distinguish between the numerous monodic forms which flourished in the seventeenth century, and to give its exact place, to the cantata. For instance, one may be inclined to class with it

several airs (in different parts of various movements) which are joined together by short recitatives. No doubt the influence of the genre can be traced here, since the pieces are certainly like shortened cantatas, but in spite of this we do not think there is sufficient ground for ranging them in the category of cantatas. These pieces, in spite of the diversity of the movements that compose them, form a single block, as well from the poetical as the musical point of view, and the division, with successive stanzas which is at the root of the cantata, does not appear in them at all. These then may be called airs—we have had occasion to publish two pieces of this sort by Luigi Rossi, to which we refer our readers.*

The first, "Diva, tu ch'in trono assisa," is a "canzone spirituale," and dates from about the year 1630. After a simple prayer to the Virgin, in a very definite melodic form, there follows a short dramatic recitative to which is linked as finale a lively air in triple time. A rather curious feature of this "canzone spirituale" is that the ensemble is sung twice over, to different words, but without any change in the notes.

The air, *Se dolente e flebile cetra*, presents an analogous plan. First, a lament with a basso ostinato of a very pathetic character. The lover despairs! A short recitative intervenes: Love tells him he ought to complain no more, but die, without a word. To conclude, there is a rapidly moving air in triple time.

We will now leave these "Airs-cantates" for the various forms of cantata practised by Luigi Rossi and his rivals.† At first we find unchanged the original type of cantata composed of several stanzas, each sung to a different air, but always on the same bass; only while Monteverdi, Grandi, Rovetta and Ferrari respect the obligation to repeat the *continuo* conscientiously without changing it in any way, Rossi contents himself with reproducing the design of the bass but does not keep to the same values for the notes; he also does not mind changing a note here and there.

Of this type is the beautiful cantata "Io che sinhor le piante" (that I have published), the words of which show the tendency of Italian taste in the seventeenth century. A lover despairs at the barbarity of his adored one. His tears become a river, which flows into the sea, and those same waves may one day bathe the feet of the disdainful lady! It is impossible to imagine sillier words set to finer melodies. The music is human, passionate, ardent, exuberant. The language of formal gallantry is changed now into cries of distress, and now into impassioned supplications. In the sculpture

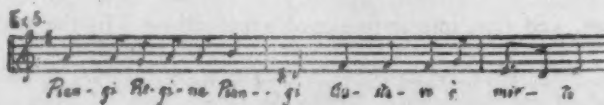
* These two airs by Luigi Rossi appeared in the Edition Sénart.

† Heugel édit. Les anciens Maîtres des chant. Tome VI.

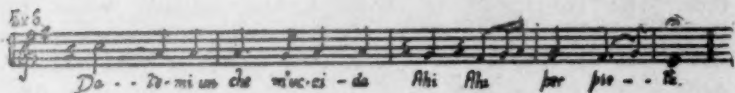
and painting of the period the same tendencies are seen, and nothing matches a love cantata of Luigi Rossi so well as a group such as Bernini's *St. Theresa*, a picture like *Venus and Mars*, by Guercchini, in the museum of Modena, or the *Susanna at the bath* of the Prado. It is an astonishing mixture of realism, and idealism, sensuality, and sentiment, of affectation and real passion. There is the same desire to vary the forms of composition, to devise fresh groupings, the same passionate joy of living, the same tendency to allure the senses by softness and grace, voluptuous rhythms, and unlooked for harmonies in sound and colour.

The cantata form was shortly to be varied by Luigi Rossi in the most ingenious manner. The cantata "*Gelosia*," that has been made popular by Gevaert's edition, shows great originality in its arrangement. It is divided into three parts, each of which contains three movements. Luigi Rossi is faithful to the convention of the unchanging bass for the different parts, but he varies the voice part in the following way: In the second part the first movement represents a sort of "double" much ornamented by diminutions of the original air. The second includes an entirely new voice part, the third reproduces the melody of the first part, with very slight variations. The third part is only a free adaptation of fresh words to the musical text of the first part. The last bars only are used to make a different ending. We find an infinitely bolder and more elaborate style in the narrative cantatas of Luigi Rossi, which from the poetic point of view are obviously inspired by the dramatic madrigals of Monteverdi and of Mazzochi. Little by little the composer frees himself from the conventions which have hitherto restrained him, particularly from the necessity of setting the different stanzas to the same bass.

We may say that Luigi Rossi has given more or less perfect examples of all the future work, from the first cantatas in canzonette or in recitative style, to those great cantatas which harmoniously connect these varied styles with one another. Among the cantatas in recitative style composed between 1630 and 1635 we must first mention the famous cantata on the death of Gustavus Adolphus (1632), "*Un ferito Cavalier*," which had a considerable success. A messenger comes to announce to the Queen of Sweden the death of her husband:



The Queen sings a long lament, each stanza of which ends with a melodious phrase, forming a refrain :

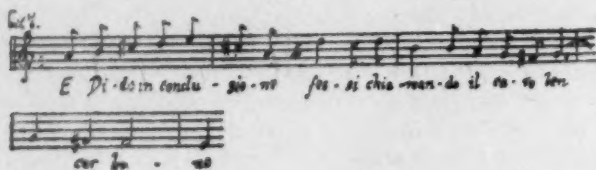


The construction is the same as that of the air in "L'Orfeo," 1647, published by Romain Rolland (*Musiciens d'autrefois*). A short recitative serves for conclusion. Like Monteverdi, Luigi Rossi excelled in Laments, and there is a profusion of them in his cantatas. The recitative cantata, on a poem of Benigni "Allor che il forte Alcide," contains a very moving lament for Deianira. It is divided into five stanzas, the first in D major, the second and third in B minor, the fourth returning to B minor after a modulation to G, and the fifth passing through G to end in D major. Luigi evidently prefers keeping to closely related keys. We shall see that Carissimi's great merit is the touch of variety and unexpectedness he brings to the tonal plan. Another cantata of the same period, also treated in the recitative style, "Ravolse il volo," is composed of four perfectly independent stanzas on different basses, but each one concluded by a refrain of three bars.

This plan of construction would be more like that of a canzone than a cantata if it were not for the narrative character of the poem and the use of the recitative style. But in fact these two species of composition (which in the collection of the period are always found as neighbours) have numerous points in common, and there are certain cantatas which it is very difficult to distinguish from canzoni and *vice versâ*. Several cantatas, for instance, Rossi's "Perche, Speranza, perche," are made up of a succession of independent songs. Each one of the eight stanzas is set to a different air and a different bass. From the year 1635 there are more and more examples of cantatas by Luigi Rossi, combining the recitative with the measured style. The cantata, "In solitario speco," opens with a long recitative and closes with a song of three couplets. The lament of the beautiful Turk, Zelemi, who loves a Christian slave, is written in recitative style, divided by a long canzone with a refrain. All these varied forms of cantata recur with the followers of Luigi Rossi, Mario Savioni, Abattini, Marazzoli, Cesti, Carlo Caproli, Ercole Bernabei, Liberati, Antonio Masini, Tenaglia, Carlo del Arpa, Atto Melani, Antonio Farina, Bocalini, etc., etc.

A magnificent collection of Italian songs, once belonging to Cardinal Mazarin, contains an immense choice of valuable cantatas previous

to the year 1648. One has only to glance at this collection to realise how great was the variety of form to which the genre had attained up to this date; one even finds a burlesque cantata on the death of Dido. This composition by Mario Savioni on some verses by Francesco Melosio begins with the words *Quando che'l buon Troiano*, and relates the departure of Æneas. The lament of Dido, and her death on the funeral pyre, is all in recitative, with an air in conclusion, which illustrates a frightful pun.

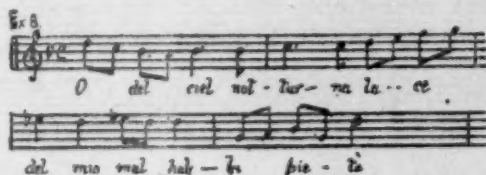


The part played by Carissimi in the evolution of the cantata is less important than is generally supposed. His secular cantatas are rather cold; the Roman style, without the fire and the conviction which the Neapolitan and the Venetian schools knew how to bring to this kind of work. It must be allowed, all the same, that he shows an entirely new feeling for tonal construction. His cantatas are constructed on a plan and a quite definite scheme of modulation. The transitions from the recitative to the air are managed with consummate skill. In all he writes one can discern the master hand of one of the first composers of his time. Carissimi was a virtuoso, and he had the skill to complete the work of Luigi Rossi; it is these two great artists who bring the cantata to the highest state of perfection which was possible for it.

The cantata, a lyric form, is for vocal chamber music what the sonata is for instrumental. It gives the virtuoso player a good opportunity of exhibiting, in a comparatively short piece, at once his facility, his eloquence, and his dramatic feeling, but, though often containing dramatic passages, the cantata is in no sense a drawing-room opera. The fact is, it was opera that approached the cantata style; the cantata was able to retain its proper lyric character till the middle of the eighteenth century. The chief grounds for criticism are the weakness, the bombast, and the bad taste of the words—we have quoted several examples—and it would certainly appear that the musicians were absolutely indifferent to the quality of the verses that they clothed with music. Give them the opportunity of composing beautiful melodies, of inventing subtle rhythms and rare harmonies, and they were content; like the painters of the same period, who show such a magnificent indifference as to the subject of

their pictures. The cantata is certainly the triumph of "Art for Art's sake"—in the sense of music pure and simple. There is therefore no need to be astonished that Carissimi, a composer of sacred music, should have employed his ingenuity in composing cantatas on trivial subjects, although the admirers, who regard him as a sort of Fra Angelico, are scandalised at a cantata such as "Love the pedlar, cries his wares in the market place." But Carissimi was a man of the eighteenth century. He was honoured by the good Pope Clement XI, who from his youth up had composed innumerable librettos of operas, and poems for cantatas and songs, all extolling love in impassioned terms. And to his dying day were not his chief confidants and favourites the eunuch Atto Melani and the famous singer Eleonora Baroni? Carissimi's art has nothing ascetic about it, and sincerity is his least virtue, but he is a workmanlike musician, of consummate cleverness, and, with Cesti, he is the best of the Italian musicians between the death of Monteverdi, Luigi Rossi, Cavalli, and the advent of Scarlatti.

It would be useless to study minutely the plan of Carissimi's cantatas. He used the same forms as Luigi Rossi, and only exercised his ingenuity to introduce more variety in the choice of keys. For instance, in his cantata "Havea la notte oscura," in which the poem relates the adventure of Hero and Leander, he opens with a recitative arioso in F, modulates to G minor, then to C minor. Leander then begins his invocations to the moon, by whose beams he is to be guided over the waves. This air begins in F, modulates to G, to B flat, to E flat, to G minor, the key in which is sung the beautiful prayer, *O del Ciel notturna luce*.



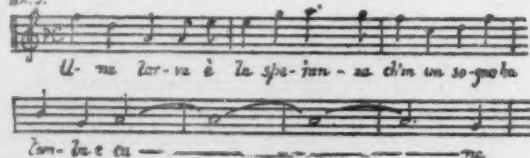
The narrative is taken up again in D major then modulates to E flat, A flat, C minor, F major. Leander's prayer, when he is on the point of being overwhelmed by the waves, *Soccorretemi, Soccorretemi*, begins in B flat, modulates to C minor, in which it ends. The short narrative which serves as conclusion brings the key back to F major. The use of these keys is always happy and expressive. Certainly we are still far away from the audacious modulations of Scarlatti and of Bononcini, but Carissimi modulates with a certainty which is lacking even to such an admirable musician

as Luigi Rossi. He contributed much to establish the idea of the modern keys and of their power of expression.

There is certainly no doubt that the cantata was a wonderful field of experiment for composers. We need not trouble ourselves here with the divers monodic forms, but we should remember that it was in the cantata that musicians learnt the art of the *aria da capo*, which they used in their operas with the happy effect that we know. The important thing to notice about the construction of the cantata is that with Carissimi, as with Luigi Rossi, Cesti, or even Alessandro Stradella, the cantata is composed of airs, or canzoni, divided by recitatives or ariose, but it always forms one compact whole. The separations between the airs and the recitatives are by no means clear cut; they are changes, rather, of movements or of rhythms, such as we find are contained in the airs, or in long dramatic recitatives.

A beautiful cantata by Stradella on some verses by G. F. Appolloni, "M'e venuto a fastidio," shows a leaning to the type of the classic cantata of Bassani and Scarlatti, in which each part is as independent as the separate movements of a sonata. The aria, the recitative and the presto are indeed connected together, but these different parts are arranged so that each is complete by itself. It is in this manner that the cantata will be evolved towards the end of the seventeenth century. Stradella's cantata begins by a recitative, arioso in D minor, with vocalisation and repetition of the words. It is followed by an air in the same key in four time :

Ex. 9.

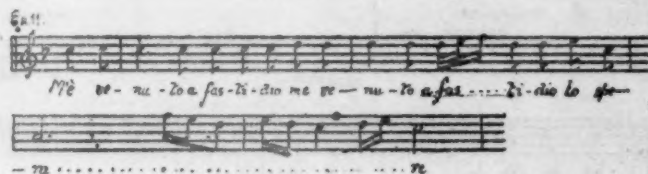


It is divided into two stanzas which are like each other but not identical. Then follows a presto, also in D minor, in well-marked 3/4 time :

Ex. 10



The second phrase in the same movement in G minor is in four time. The opening phrase of the cantata then reappears, but a fourth lower, in F major. Then comes a long recitative arioso which opens in B flat, and after sundry modulations brings back in the key of D minor, with slight modification, the phrase which serves for the refrain. An air in a languishing $3/2$ time maintains itself in D minor and is linked to the dominant by an *adagio*, also in $3/2$, which, after a curious chromatic movement in the bass, joins itself to the recitative conclusion with a $4/4$ rhythm, which brings back the initial phrase, slightly modified.



The form of the *aria da capo* was developed, in a way, inside the cantata, and it is this cantata which shows us how.

With Bassani, Scarlatti and Bononcini, we come to rather a different idea of the cantata. Whereas up to now the employment of instrumental refrains in cantata had been rather the exception, we shall see it become the rule. The accompanying instruments are the clavecin, which gives the *continuo*, the 'cello, which plays the bass and adds "body" to the clavecin; then, for the refrains, two violins. While in the few cantatas by Luigi Rossi and his contemporaries where they use instruments, the scoring of the accompanying parts is quite elementary, that of the cantatas of Bassani and Scarlatti is beautifully finished, and often calls for real virtuosity.

Thanks to Corelli and to the "School of Bologna," one can realise the immense amount of progress made by instrumental music in the course of a few years. About the year 1646 the human voice was still the only instrument capable of giving the exact interpretation of the music and bringing out every point with certainty. Now it begins to be rivalled by the violin and the violoncello, and the sonata enters into competition with the cantata. One can well understand the desire felt by composers of the new school to combine the marvellous resources of the voice with those quite new resources of instruments treated as soloists. The short cantatas of Bassani are

models of the genre. A large number having been published, we need not give a long list of them here. The cantata, "Bella Piangente," from the collection entitled "La Sirena Amatora," 1699, begins with a refrain for two violins, *continuo*, which sets forth the *motif mélodique* of the first air in 4/4 time, *vivace*. Note the device which consists in repeating the first word twice over, a device afterwards adopted by the other composers, Flavio Lanciani, Mancini, Gio Bononcini, or Alessandro Scarlatti:



This first air, in *da capo* form, ends with the repetition of the opening melody. These bars for instruments serve for a close. Then comes a recitative introducing a fresh air, *allegro allegre*, in 4/4 with a light and lively rhythm in *da capo* form, with a central episode, *largo*. One can see how fast the airs have gained on the recitatives, and we shall notice the same thing if we glance at the innumerable cantatas of Alessandro Scarlatti. The recitatives are in general very short, always intermingled with melodic phrases which are very "singing" in feature and ornament. Certain of these cantatas are very long, others very short. The cantata "Elpino tradito" is classical in form; a recitative explaining the situation, an air in two couplets for the sorrowful hero, and an arioso narrating the death of the hapless lover. Scarlatti has written innumerable little cantatas either on this plan or else, composed of an air, a recitative and another air. There are others of a more complicated structure. The beautiful cantata "Augellin sospendi" which, according to Mr. Dent, dates from Scarlatti's youth, begins with a fine air in 3/2, in C minor, to which succeeds a short arioso. Then comes (preceded by a short ritournelle) the air in 4/4, "Se nascesti," in two couplets, followed by a recitative,

which brings back the original air. This is followed again by a recitative, after which is the aria in two parts, "Al' florido lume," the first in 4/4, the second in 3/2, which is repeated a second time with different words, and is joined direct to the short conclusion, largo. To sum up, at the time of Scarlatti the cantata was a very elastic form which united, for the pleasure of the ear and intellect, all the monodic forms then in use.

The composer is left absolutely free as to the number of parts of which the cantata shall be constituted, as well as to the form of each. From this point of view the cantata, at least in Italy, never crystallises into formulas like the sonata of the future. It is by the cantata, more perhaps than by the opera and at least as much as the sonata, that the Italian music was propagated in Europe, and exercised its predominance in every country. In France, noticeably, as well as in Germany, the cantatas are composed by the italianising musicians.

During the whole of the eighteenth century the cantata remains the ideal form of chamber music for the voice, and for the first half of the century, the writers such as Hasse, Jomelli, Graun, Handel, Bononcini, Clérambault, Astorga and Montéclair, composed masterpieces of plastic beauty. On the other hand, it cannot be said that in this field they invented anything new, and the cantata for voice alone seems to have touched its high-water mark with Luigi Rossi and Alessandro Scarlatti. It is the oratorio, the sacred cantata taken from the Italian religious history as exemplified by Carissimi, that in the course of the eighteenth century will reach its complete development, and these magnificent forms, illustrated by the masterpieces of Bach and Handel, originated in the modest cantata for voice alone of which we have tried, for the first time we believe, to retrace the slow and difficult steps. It must be borne in mind, in an appreciation of the cantata for voice alone, that it had an enormous influence on the evolution of the lyric drama.

It was the cantata which contributed to substitute an ideal of plastic beauty and of lyric expression for the solely dramatic ideal of the creators of melodrama. To be sure, the dramatic ideal had its champions, and Gluck, at the end of the eighteenth century, managed to make it prevail; but if, for more than a century the opera was looked upon as a concert with magnificent scenery, the contented public showing supreme indifference to the inextricable confusion of the plot, it was to the cantata's æsthetic triumph that this indifference must be attributed. If from this point of view the cantata had a depressing effect on literary taste, it must, on the other hand, be given the credit for having been a matchless instrument for the improvement of music. It was by writing cantatas that the musicians learnt to order a scene of opera on a tonal plan, to link together with

skill, air, recitatives and ariosi—to bring the varied melodic forms to the highest degree of perfection. It was through writing cantatas destined for an educated public that Alessandro Scarlatti in his operas learned, later, to venture upon the most extraordinary harmonic audacities, and to understand the effects to be produced from them. The cantata for a single voice was a magnificent school of formal beauty, and of lyric expression. It is the symbol of the revenge taken by music, upon literature, when the Florentines attempted to make her literature's slave.

HENRY PRUNIERES.

TRANS. P. WYATT EDGEELL.

The Editor regrets that the author's name was wrongly given in the first part of this article.

BERLIOZ THE CRITIC—II

Our last article sketched the attitude of Berlioz to the musical world of his day. We considered him in the light of a combative journalist, wielding an eager, biting pen, and possessed by certain deep-rooted aversions. Contrapuntists, even the greatest of them; pedants, though as worthy as Cherubini; tenors and prima-donnas of the Rossinian type; the bad operas in which they sang; all dull or vulgar orchestral conventions—these were red rags at which he always charged. Then there was the crowd of musical smatterers and pretentious people at whom he laughed in his feuilletons; sometimes with malice, sometimes with good-humour, and at his best with a salience of wit hardly unworthy of Molière. Beneath all this writing there smouldered the wrath of the thwarted pioneer of genius. Rage or mock where he might, the root of the trouble was that Paris would not listen to his music. The passing successes of his young manhood had wilted under the blight of the Second Empire. His triumphs abroad could not console him. Yet ignoble as the complaints of disappointed ambition may be, they gain weight when posterity admits their justice. Ten years after his death his countrymen had accepted him; the virtue of his musical gospel was whole-heartedly admitted.

The aversions which animate "*Les Grotesques de la Musique*" and much of "*Les Soirées d'Orchestre*" are the glaring reverse side of strong enthusiasms, which for him are driving principles. These latter are most clearly expressed in "*A travers Chants*," the best of his critical miscellanies. Here his positive musical ideals come out in the course of studies of his favourite composers. The collection is more homogeneous than the two others we have mentioned—less of a lucky-bag of squibs and sketches. Much of it had been drafted as early as the eighteen-twenties; some had indeed been published; but in its final form the work appeared in 1862, the last critical manifesto of a disillusioned, ageing man, who wrote little afterwards but autobiography.

Beethoven, though not his first, was his greatest musical passion. Always the most subjective of critics—and a creative genius, assuming the critical role, is bound to be subjective—Berlioz saw in him a fellow-revolutionary who had broken new technical ground at the imperious need of emotional expression. He also saw in him the first

great programme-musician, who had sometimes dallied openly (and often, so Berlioz would have it, subconsciously) with the notion that music can express definite mental states, paint pictures and tell stories. Misleading as both these views were, he held them passionately; and he needed no Paganini to tell him that he was Beethoven's successor. Disdainful of some of the laws which govern the nature of music, Berlioz failed to see that Beethoven was not in the strict sense an iconoclast, that he did not break old moulds, but expand them, his intellect exploring their possibilities with infinite zest and patience, until they could contain the immense new charge of personal feeling. Again, he did not see that, with the rarest exceptions, any imaginable programme in a work of Beethoven is a secondary conception, only limiting the meaning of music whose life, organic and emotional, is primarily musical. Yet to expect him to have seen this is unfair. Kindling at all sorts of literary and pictorial analogies, this arch-Romantic was always ready to call up suggestions of one art to supplement those of another. He saw a Beethoven of his own, which is more than many of us do. He fell prostrate before his idol, and raised hymns of praise at which it is sometimes impossible to help smiling to-day. No matter: narrow as was his vision, no one before him had ever said such good things about Beethoven.

The opening pages of his critical study of the nine symphonies in "A travers Chants" take us back to the Paris of the eighteen-twenties, overridden with Italian opera and forgetful of any instrumental tradition. In those days even Germany looked askance at the works of Beethoven's last period. But in Paris, one musician ran away, fingers in ears, from the Second Symphony, when Habeneck conducted it. For its *larghetto* movement, the *allegretto* of the Seventh Symphony was substituted; only thus had the rest of the work any hope of success. "Cuts" were made freely. It is pleasant, however, to learn that after some trials the uninstructed public grew to like their Beethoven before the critics did. Lesueur, by no means the worst of the pedants, and the only one of his teachers whom Berlioz respected, was prevailed upon to go and hear the C minor. It was great, he confessed, but such music ought not to be written; when he had tried to put his hat on, after the performance, he couldn't find the top of his head! The story gives well the sense of emotional perturbation, almost of moral outrage, felt in dovescotes of French academicism and triviality, as the fearful German wildfowl hovered overhead. Berlioz's own words give the current opinion vividly: "Bizarre, incohérent, diffus, hériassé de modulations dures, d'harmonies sauvages, dépourvu de mélodie, d'une expression outrée, trop bruyant, et d'une difficulté horrible." Such was Beethoven's music.

French composers of those days were bred up to an art usually colourless in harmony, patterned in melody, frivolous or ceremonious in spirit. Berlioz's own welcome of Beethoven as a revolutionary was eager, but by no means whole-hearted. Incurably subjective, he praised the audacities he practised himself. Others he did not often condemn, such was his reverence for his idol; rather, he passed them by, more in sorrow than in anger. Some of his views are surprisingly pedantic. He might have been expected to welcome, or at least to tolerate, the "false entry" of the horn in the "Eroica," where, for an instant, harmonies of the common chord and dominant seventh of E flat clash together. But no: "Il est difficile de trouver une justification sérieuse à ce caprice musicale." And in a footnote he gives up the attempt: "Ce caprice est une absurdité." The dissonance which opens the finale of the Ninth Symphony beats him, though harmonically it is only a simple instance of *appoggiatura*. He cannot bear such snags in the musical texture; on the other hand he enjoys Beethoven's most daring modulations. This betrays the fact that he thought harmonically rather than contrapuntally; in blocks or splashes of sound rather than in lines. His own modulations often give the effect of a splash of colour or a wrench; the happiest of Beethoven's reveal an unsuspected logic in the weaving of his lines, just as his characteristic "snags" give zest and sting to the movement of his texture.

The silences of Berlioz in this critical study are eloquent. He has nothing that matters to say about the form of the symphonies, the organic expansion and vitalising of detail with which Beethoven endowed the simple moulds of Haydn and Mozart. Construction—and we know how big his designs were—seems to have been for Berlioz a matter involving incalculable elements. There had to be inspiration from some dramatic or pictorial source; and there was continuous suggestive power in his instruments. As for the structure which resulted, that depended less on musical development than on Fortune, who (sometimes) favours the bold.

As might be expected he is always worth reading on Beethoven's instrumentation. Viewed from this aspect, audacities which would otherwise repel him seem tolerable. D naturals may grind against a dominant pedal point on E and D sharp in the finale of the Seventh: no matter. "La force tonale de cette dominante est telle, que le ré dièse ne l'altère en aucune façon, et qu'on entend bourdonner le mi exclusivement. Beethoven ne faisait pas de musique pour les yeux." When instruments rang clearly in his mind his harmonic sense took courage. At times, indeed, he turns the tables on the master who has perplexed him; and now he is sure of his ground. It is not the half-equipped theorist, it is the practical craftsman who

draws attention to the overpowering, by horns and trumpets, of the main theme of the finale in the Seventh Symphony. An overweighted point of imitation, in the slow movement of the Fifth, does not escape him. And when, as often, he commends the master's use of the orchestra, his words have the authentic accent of one craftsman praising another. The ever fresh beauty of the "dropped" oboe tune at the beginning of the Seventh evokes the remark "On ne saurait débiter d'une façon plus originale." We should read into this the homage of one who could himself begin a work arrestingly enough, and yet who despaired of rivalling the cunning simplicity of this masterstroke. Another quotation, one of many that might have been chosen, will give a fuller taste of his happiest appreciative vein. It refers to the wonderful passage with the drum tremolos in the development of the first movement of the Fourth Symphony. At least three prime virtues of good criticism are combined in this long technical description, from which we can only take extracts. The practical instrumentalist in Berlioz thrills at the use of the drum, so original, so imaginative—the mysterious rumblings, swelling later into a mighty roar; the harmonist is entranced at the modulation by which the music veers away from tenuous remote regions of B major and sails home with triumph in B flat; while the poet in him, touching the technical language here and there, kindles finally with an apt simile drawn from the external world:

"La force de tonalité de ce si bémol, très peu perceptible en commençant, devient de plus en plus grande au fur et à mesure que le tremolo se prolonge; puis les autres instruments, semant de petits traits inachevés leur marche progressive, aboutissent avec le grondement continu de la timbale à un forte général, où l'accord parfait de si bémol s'établit enfin à plein orchestre dans toute sa majesté. Cet étonnant crescendo est une des choses les mieux inventées que nous connaissions en musique . . . il part du mezzo forte, va se perdre un instant dans un pianissimo sous des harmonies dont la couleur est constamment vague et indécise, puis reparait avec des accords d'une tonalité plus arrêtée, et n'éclate qu'au moment où le nuage qui voilait cette modulation est complètement dissipé. On dirait d'un fleuve dont les eaux paisibles disparaissent tout à coup, et ne sortent de leur lit souterrain que pour retomber avec fracas en cascade écumante."

The critical exquisite of to-day may find what fault he likes with this; certainly the final simile, which was meant to crown the passage, lets it down with conventional language. But with its fusion of interests, this extract heralds the advent of musical criticism as a full-grown art. Dry-as-dust has wrought havoc in his time; so has the windy rhapsodist; it is now a truism that good writing on music

must combine deep and wide technical knowledge with an alert æsthetic imagination. Berlioz is among the chief of those who established this union, by precept and by example.

We come now to the programme, the "*idée poétique*," which he pursued everywhere in Beethoven. Fortunately, if he found it, he did so in varying measure. Applied in full rigour, this theory, or rather this instinct of his, fostered by his peculiar musico-literary upbringing, led him into his worst critical blunders. Writing of the "*Eroica*," he wishes, excusably, that the composer's original subtitle had been retained: "heroic symphony to celebrate the memory of a great man." Then, with his double share of French oratorical bias, he forces all the ideas of the work into the type of those evoked by a "funeral oration." This is worse; if the march and part of the finale pass muster, the first movement does not; and what is the scherzo? Funeral games, as in the *Iliad*, says Berlioz. "*Jusque dans les évolutions les plus capricieuses de son orchestre, Beethoven a su conserver la couleur grave et sombre, la tristesse profonde qui devaient naturellement dominer dans un tel sujet.*" We rub our eyes. This of a movement that sets the blood tingling with the zest and fun of being alive, a phrase or two on the horns, at the end of the trio, being its only shadow of melancholy or misgiving! Such is the fate of Berlioz the critic when the will to believe runs away with him on the trail of a pet theory.

It is hopeless to impose ideas on music; but we can let it suggest to us what ideas it may. Strewn through Berlioz's study of the symphonies are admirable analogies, thrown out in passing, without the insistence that would certainly spoil them. The well-known comparison of a double-bass passage in the C minor to the gambols of a gamesome elephant is one of the few glints of humour that shine through these over-solemn pages. And though on a keener emotional plane than we should admit nowadays, his comments on the allegretto of the Seventh Symphony are truly imagined, and enriched with happy comparisons drawn from his own English reading. He writes thus of the major theme that shines out after the uncanny pulsating gloom of the main subject:

"*Mais une lueur d'espoir vient de naître; à ces accents déchirants succède une vaporeuse mélodie, pure, simple, douce, triste et résignée comme 'la patience souriant à la douleur.' Les basses seules continuent leur inexorable rythme sous cet arc-en-ciel mélodieux; c'est, pour emprunter encore une citation à la poésie anglaise,*

"One fatal remembrance, one shadow that throws
Its black shade alike o'er our joys and our woes."

But no mortal poet suffices him when he delivers himself on the slow movement of the Fourth Symphony. So perfect is its form, so sublime its pitying tenderness, that Dante's Francesca herself cannot help him to a true analogy. "Ce morceau semble avoir été soupiré par l'archange Michel, un jour où, saisi d'un accès de mélancolie, il contemplait les mondes, debout sur le seuil de l'empyrée." Of course this has been laughed at; and it is Berlioz's own fault if we remember that he has shown himself more at home with the fallen orders of archangels than with Michael. But who shall set limits to the suggestive power of great music in a sensitive mind? The analogy is extravagant, but not empty. For all its wealth of detail, the spiritual essence of the movement is in the first four notes of its theme, floating calmly down the diatonic scale. To anyone normally sensitive these notes do in fact come laden with an angelic compassionateness. Chimes, carols, lullabies are in them; Brahms wrote one lullaby in his E flat Intermezzo. The darting imagination of Berlioz might well fly to the utmost bounds, to find his analogy. If to this degree of sensitiveness there had been added the comprehensive technical knowledge and the self-mastery he never had, he might well have been the prince of writers on music.

We have dwelt on his study of the symphonies because it shows his critical power at fullest stretch, and also because he has little to say of any other works of Beethoven, except *Fidelio*. This opera he analyses, and praises for its great dramatic and emotional force; he seems not to be worried by the puerile melodrama of its plot or the long-drawn unreality of its situations. It is fitting, however, that before we pass from his writing on Beethoven, we should come down from the æsthetic to the personal plane. Beethoven more than anyone else had heartened him in his fight for musical freedom. On Beethoven's instrumentation he had mainly founded his own wonderful new art of the orchestra; the symphonies had inspired him to create the first masterpieces of imaginative orchestration in France. Wherever he went, the music of Beethoven spoke to him in the voice of a master and friend, whom he might hope to emulate, but never to excel. Staying in London, he hears sounds of the C minor Trio coming from a room near his own: "J'ouvre toute grande ma porte. Entre, entre, sois la bienvenue, fière mélodie! . . . Comme il vole à tire d'aile, cet aigle infatigable!" The eagle was one of his favorites similes for the master. Or, seven years after the event, he describes to a friend his visit to the Festival at Bonn, when a statue had been unveiled, and he had left the stone Beethoven in the square, children already playing under his feet, sparrows perching in his hands. A shiver of premature old age comes over him, and he goes on: "Nous ne retrouvons plus ces grands ébranlements, ces incendies de l'âme que firent naître en nous les premières auditions de ses symphonies."

Le printemps et l'été ont-ils réellement existé pour nous? L'aquilon souffle avec une si cruelle persistance." Such passages betray the fact that his adoration of Beethoven was partly the adoration of the weak for the strong; of the man who could never bring his great gifts into due harmony, whose genius, in Rolland's words, "lay at the mercy of a weak character," for the man who, fighting misfortune no less cruel, got the best out of himself and kept young to the end.

It is well known that the reading of Gluck's scores in the Conservatoire, and the hearing of some of his operas, first decided Berlioz to devote himself irrevocably to music. This influence, added to his boyish love of Virgil, fostered in his musical nature a genuine classical strain often overlooked. It is well seen in the sculptured lines of his best melodies, such as that of the "Sanctus" in the *Requiem*, the main themes of the "Scène d'amour" in *Romeo and Juliet*, or Andromache's entrance in *Les Troyens*. Berlioz could often think superbly in one line of melody at a time; and his melodies, though less consummate in their carving, are often longer than Gluck's. The two composers have other affinities—their weak polyphonic sense, only kindled in Gluck in his greatest moments, and, above all, their absolute dependence on literary or dramatic suggestion.

Though not blind to his weaknesses—he calls the overture to *Orfeo* an "incroyable niaiserie"—Berlioz kept through life an intense admiration for Gluck. It was partly, to be sure, a negative admiration. Gluck was not Rossini; he was a stout stick with which to belabour decadent Italian opera, its virtuosi, and all who believed in it. On Gluck's theory of the relations of music and drama Berlioz held vacillating opinions; but in practice he clearly showed that Gluck's idea of the subordination of music was not for him. With a sure instinct he picks out the finest strokes of dramatic colour which Gluck brought into the meagre, inflexible orchestral schemes of his day. Readers of the "Traité d'instrumentation" will remember how he takes fire at the Furies' brazen "No!" breaking in upon the plaints of Orpheus, at the grotesque double-bass effects descriptive of the barking of Cerberus, at the touching long-drawn notes of the oboe, as Agamemnon sings of "Le cri plaintif de la nature," and at many other arresting places. His comments on the celestial dance-measures and choruses of the scene in Elysium are finely imagined:

"Quelle merveille que la musique des Champs Elysées! Ces harmonies vaporeuses, ces melodies mélancoliques comme le bonheur, cette instrumentation douce et faible, donnant si bien l'idée de la paix infinie!"

Through these words there shines a spirit not usually associated with Berlioz, but one which never left him, however much he might revel in his pandemoniums; a spirit of delicacy—Rolland calls it

"virginal"—which is heard, for instance, in the "Sanctus" of the *Requiem* in the "Scène d'amour," and indeed in most of his love-music, which is as different, in this matter, from *Tristan* as it well can be. This purity of musical imagination responded to the same quality in Gluck.

We expect him to be enthusiastic about Weber, a composer whose innovations in opera went far in the direction of Wagner's, but not too far for Berlioz to keep pace with them. His paeans of praise on *Der Freischütz* and on *Oberon* are almost unqualified, though he demurs for a moment at Weber's rash treatment of the voice. But the vivid, pulsating orchestration, the melodies, so dreamily gracious, or so vaultingly chivalrous, above all, the composer's unique gift of conjuring up the supernatural in music with one sudden, simple stroke—these qualities found a rapturous response in Berlioz; nor was he troubled, any more than in *Fidelio*, with the weaknesses of the operatic stories. Here is a mere extract from the long passage on Agatha's air "Leise, leise," in *Der Freischütz*.

"Non, non, il faut le dire, il n'y a point de si bel air. Jamais aucun maître allemand, italien ou français n'a fait ainsi parler successivement dans la même scène la prière sainte, la mélancolie, l'inquiétude, la méditation, le sommeil de la nature, la silencieuse éloquence de la nuit, l'harmonieux mystère des cieux étoilés, le tourment de l'attente, l'espoir, la demi-certitude, la joie, l'ivresse, le transport, l'amour éperdu! Et quel orchestre pour accompagner ces nobles mélodies vocales! Quelles inventions! Quelles recherches ingénieuses! Quels trésors qu'une inspiration soudaine fit découvrir!" . . .

The shower of exclamation marks is not yet half over; and an Englishman of the twentieth century feels uncomfortable when transcribing these rhapsodies of French Romanticism. Yet anyone who knows "Leise, leise" will admit that its successive moods could hardly be better expressed in words than in that long torrential sentence.

Dying as he did in 1869, Berlioz could know little of the mature Wagner. On the earlier operas he is often a sound enough judge, though bothered at times, as were his contemporaries, by what seemed to be harsh dissonance, and absence of melody. The lashing bare fifths at the start of the "Dutchman" overture delight him; he well knew, in his own music, how to exploit a daring nakedness of harmony. And, all those years ago, he can put his finger on vulgarities which time, unmoved by idolaters, has confirmed as such. He counts the repetitions of that eternal violin figure, in the first and last sections of the overture to *Tannhäuser*. He makes them a hundred and forty-two. "N'est-ce pas trop?" he asks. Yes, it is too much, whatever depths of meaning the figure may be alleged to have.

Though the pilgrims' hymn has points, musicians now generally admit the pretentious hollowness of its treatment. The most generous praise of Wagner, marking the furthest reach of his appreciation of such novel music, is reserved by Berlioz for the prelude to *Lohengrin*:

"... Les enchaînements harmoniques en sont mélodieux, charmants, et l'intérêt ne languit pas un instant, malgré la lenteur du crescendo et celle de la décroissance. Ajoutons que c'est une merveille d'instrumentation dans les teintes douces comme dans le coloris éclatant, et qu'on y remarque vers la fin une basse montant toujours diatoniquement pendant que les autres parties descendent, dont l'idée est fort ingénieuse. Ce beau morceau d'ailleurs ne contient aucune espèce de duretés; c'est suave, harmonieux autant que grand, fort et retentissant; pour moi, c'est un chef d'œuvre."

This is handsome; and the allusion to the rising bass, under the long descent of the violins near the end, shows Berlioz to be using his senses of counterpoint and harmony more courageously than usual. For this splendid convergence of two long lines of texture involves one fairly sharp dissonance, which he passes over without a word.

But alas! the prelude to *Tristan* is too much for him. As our last quotation, we record his short, bitter summary of it, and his baffled confession:

"Il s'agit de nouveau d'un morceau lent, commencé pianissimo, s'élevant peu à peu jusqu'au fortissimo et retombant à la nuance de son point de départ, sans autre thème qu'une sorte de gémissement chromatique, mais rempli d'accords dissonants dont de longues appoggiatures, remplaçant la note réelle de l'harmonie, augmentent encore la cruauté. J'ai lu et relu cette page étrange; je l'ai écoutée avec l'attention la plus profonde et un vif désir d'en découvrir le sens; eh bien, il faut l'avouer, je n'ai pas encore la moindre idée de ce que l'auteur a voulu faire."

The art of *Tristan* laid too bare the joints in his musical armour. The work is, of course, fundamentally a polyphonic tissue; it deals in mysterious clashings, in implications and juxtapositions of foreign keys. They sound smooth to us; but Berlioz's ears, unaccustomed to working the strands of texture into their sharper, remoter complications, could only hear roughness, not the rainbow smoothness we hear. Wagner the instrumentalist, Wagner the dramatist, he could admire; but on this rock of texture he struck. Here, in sight of his Ultima Thule, the adventurer had to stop; others, younger, better equipped, if not more generously gifted than he, pushed on and outstripped him.

The more we read his writing, the more we wonder both at his limitations and at his wildly unbalanced power. The list of his

disqualifications as a critic is a long one. His ignorance is immense; it is also defiant and scornful. What he dislikes is not worth knowing. Handel and Bach are outside the pale. Palestrina was a mediocrity. Contrapuntists are pedants. There is no good in coloratura writing. There is no old music that matters; there was none, for example, in Elizabethan England. His megalomania, or to use kinder language, his exclusive devotion to orchestral and vocal music on a big scale, gives a forbidding, inhuman tinge to his art. It was this cast of mind, doubtless, which made him pass negligently by the songs of Schubert, the piano music of Chopin, even the work of the Schumann who praised him with such generous discernment. He can be worse than negligent—malevolent. He enjoyed being rude to old Cherubini. We have quoted his appreciation of Wagner, but not the letter to Mme. Massart, in which he howls with jealous delight over the failure of *Tannhäuser* at the Opera. Wagner, of course, stood in the way of his own *Troyens*.

His critical writing reflects these undesirable qualities. It is, as a whole, noisy, wearisome in its emphasis, hyperbolic in praise and blame; it is also incurably desultory, the habits of the feuilletoniste invading his most serious studies. His only piece of writing with any order about it is the "Traité d'instrumentation." Ill-nature spoils much of his wit, otherwise so delightful; bad taste spoils more of it. Yet the wit, that might have seasoned all his books, is kept curiously confined; it is the servant of Berlioz the journalist, the memoir-writer, the correspondent. When he comes really to grips with Gluck or Beethoven, hardly a smile escapes him. Not that we want him to cut capers; but the sense of humour, kept within hail, might have saved him from many an extravagance. It is a French fault to keep in watertight compartments one's eloquence and one's perception of the ridiculous.

Yet those who write about music will not forget the man who, among all his other enterprises, roughed out a true road for the critic of imagination, the critic who fuses together a keen literary culture and a sound knowledge, technical and æsthetic, of the art of music. Even his ragings and mockings helped to clear obstinate weeds out of the way. What though he praised some small men and neglected some great ones, when, in Sir Henry Hadow's words, he was "the first musician in Europe who really appreciated Beethoven"? His loyalty to his best-loved masters, in music and in literature, was constant and absolutely fearless. And the pen with which he set down his best thoughts had fire enough in it to keep them alive, direction enough to keep them valuable, bite and hardness enough to keep them from decay.

W. WRIGHT ROBERTS.

THE PURCELL FANTASIES AND THEIR INFLUENCE ON MODERN MUSIC

WHILE I was studying some of the Purcell Fantasies for three, four and five parts (from the MS. in the British Museum, which includes some twenty of them for different combinations) I came across one of the finest examples of the whole period, and I cannot resist the desire to make every music-lover acquainted with its astonishing beauty. This study further convinced me how much all the great composers since that time owe to Purcell and his contemporaries. Here are the first sixteen bars of it :

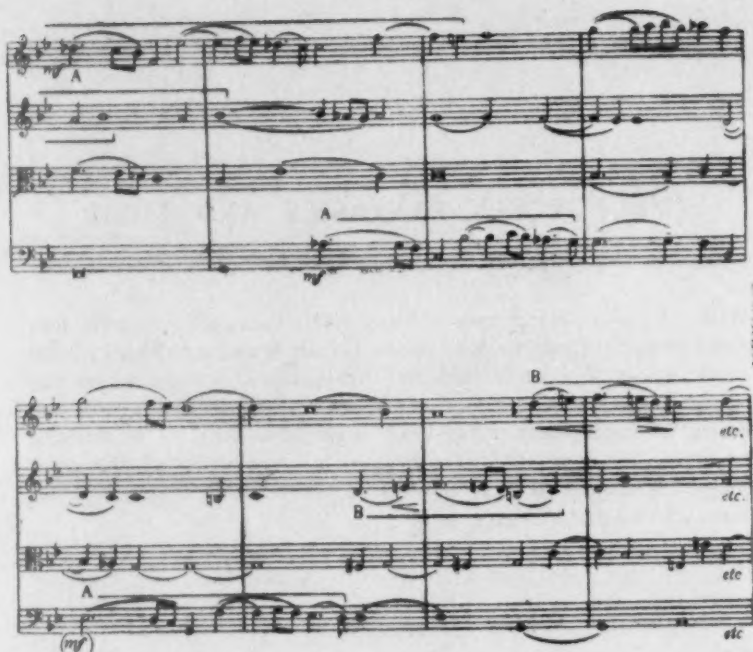
FANTASIA.

HENRY PURCELL. June 19(1680)

EX. 1

(Slow, with much expression)

The musical score is presented in two systems, each with four staves. The first system contains the first eight bars, and the second system contains the next eight bars. The key signature is one flat (G minor). The first system includes markings 'A' and 'B' above specific notes. The second system includes markings 'Bb major', 'F minor', and 'Bb maj' above specific notes. Dynamic markings include (p), mf, and (f). The tempo/mood is indicated as '(Slow, with much expression)'.



and when you have heard them mentally you must hear them actually, performed by four players who have a really expressive sense of tone and rhythm. You will at once receive, if you stand at the right distance from the players in order to hear it as a whole, an impression so perfectly satisfying that it can be attributed only to the beauty of the composer's inspiration and to the perfection of his writing; we have here a perfect example of the maximum of effect (and expression) produced by the minimum of means.

If you take subjects A and B and try to evaluate the expressive importance of each so as to decide which is the leading theme, you will find, such is their intrinsic beauty, that it is almost impossible to do so; but, when having weighed them, you decide that A is really the more important, then notice also how Purcell uses B in each bar of the principal subject A. We have also here an example of part-writing at its best, because of its unconventional character, because of its simplicity, because of its invention, because of its tonal and atonal audacity (notice the mixture

of B flat major and F minor in the 6th, 7th, 8th and 9th bars) and, above all, because of the fullness of its general effect, for, after all, in spite of all æsthetic theorising, everything rests upon the result obtained, that is to say, upon the effect of the whole. If we continue our study of this fantasy, we find that at the fourteenth bar the secondary subject B of the first two bars becomes the leading subject, and finds thereof its full expressive value. The second section opens with a more rhythmical subject

EX. 2.

Example 2 is a musical score for four staves, likely representing different instruments or voices. It is in C minor, as indicated by the key signature (three flats). The notation includes various musical symbols such as notes, rests, and dynamic markings like 'C(a)' and 'etc.'. The first staff has a treble clef, while the others have different clefs. The music is written in a style typical of 17th-century English lute or keyboard music.

which gives the right sort of contrast to the lament-like mood of the first section. It grows through eight bars to a perfect cadence in C minor. Then comes a most intimate and dreaming bridge-section which opens with these lovely bars

EX. 3.

Example 3 is a musical score for four staves, continuing the piece. It is in C minor. The notation includes various musical symbols such as notes, rests, and dynamic markings like 'F', 'D', 'E', and 'etc.'. The first staff has a treble clef, while the others have different clefs. The music is written in a style typical of 17th-century English lute or keyboard music.

Here the parts move harmonically together and give to the ear the

repose desired after the sometimes very complex counterpoint of the preceding sections and prepares the fourth section of four bars

EX. 4.

CODA.

which closes unexpectedly in E flat major (5th bar) with a most grandiose effect; a veritable "find." An admirable coda of four bars where the leading subjects interlace leads us to a serene conclusion, worthy of the beauty of this little marvel.

There has been, since Purcell and his contemporaries, more learned, more extensive part-writing, but there has not been produced, to my knowledge, in the writing for four parts, a more perfect form of expression. In the Haydn quartets, for instance, we find a much better handling and employment of stringed instrumental effects and a fuller use of all the resources of the bow. The form also, having extended into sonata form, offers greater scope and brings more variety to the progress of each movement; but I repeat that the expressive value of Purcell's four-part writing shows him to have realised greater depth in these fantasies, and thereby proves him to have possessed a more sensitive, shall we say a more modern, nature? During a recent tour abroad with my string quartet I have observed, time

after time, the astonishment of the musicians and musicologues at the writing in these short pieces. So great is the richness of the sonerity that one feels that the chief preoccupation of these composers in writing concerted music must have been purely the pleasure of sound. Instead of seeking this result through rare or new harmonies, they obtained a much greater effect by the sureness of their contrapuntal science and by that delicate inspiration which reflects the whole aspect of the current life of their century.

Curiously enough, the study of Fauré's last quartet on which I was at work about the same time, subconsciously revealed to me the striking analogy between the writing of these two composers. It may appear strange that after an interval of two and a half centuries both these musicians should have used the same means to achieve the same end (although their material is naturally different), but nevertheless this shows indisputably that in music, as in everything else, "*plus ça change, plus c'est la même chose.*" If you compare these few bars with the example No. 1 of Purcell, you will see what I mean.

QUATUOR, Op. 121.

G FAURÉ

EX. 5

Allegro moderato. (♩ = 76)

No. 6
Same movt

No. 7
Andante.

No. 8
Same mouvt

Examples 7 and 8, taken from the Andante, further prove the analogy of their writing, and although the harmonic treatment of Fauré shows that he has naturally been influenced by the evolution of harmony since Purcell's time, we must realise that the process is absolutely identical. If you find that in the course of the whole work the invention and pulse of the Fauré quartet is the weaker, remember also that Purcell wrote these fantasies when he was twenty-two, while Fauré composed his first string quartet at the age of nearly eighty. Personally I am not surprised to find that at the end of his long life Fauré should have come to the conclusion that this way of writing was the best, whereas Purcell had done it because in his days all cultivated musicians were great contrapuntalists and therefore did not think of writing in any other style.

It seems therefore that Fauré can claim the greater merit for having worked round towards this goal in an age when the tendencies were so different. Does this not again show us that what we call progress is merely "change," and that art and life move eternally in a circle? Be this as it may, both were worked in what is, I believe, not

merely the right, but the only direction, and I should not be surprised to find in a few years time that Fauré's last works (all written in this very retrograde and sober style) will have influenced strongly the modern writers and especially those of the modern French school. Franck did very much the same thing at a time when all the young composers were puzzled by the colossal output of Wagner; he went back to the old classical forms and using a more modern harmony with it opened the doors of the modern school and showed that chamber music, based upon contrapuntal writing, and not lyric music was to continue the link between the great composers of all times. Palestrina was the first writer of chamber music, although he used the religious settings and wrote for voices, but all the great ones have been working on the same basis, and it is there among the immortals that I like to think of Purcell and Fauré.

ANDRÉ MANGEOT.

THE TIME AND THE PLACE

INTRODUCTION TO A SKETCH OF HOLST (EXTRACT).

A SKETCH of the work of Gustav Holst entails some indication of the historical course of English music and of the state of the musical England of his time. A chequered course! A tangled state!

For the art of this musician attempts a large synthesis. It embraces elements from England's remoter musical past, together with a free choice from modern Europe. No one before him had so strongly felt our traditional and our sixteenth and seventeenth century music as living influences while at the same time welcoming any stimulation that was to be had from contemporaries.

We shall see how the synthesis was effected and the composer's receptiveness justified. The fearlessness of it was a sign not only of a frank, unsuspicious mind, but also of a country, a musical community, where there was any amount of work obviously waiting to be done, any number of things still to be said, of loose threads to be picked up.

It is lucky for the subtilising, tortuous mind to be born into a mature society, and equally for the frank and go-ahead to find an unencumbered field. A man like Holst in his England was able to cry "O brave new world!" at the very time when musical Europe was harassed by the suspicion that all plain facts had been sufficiently stated, that the eternal verities were truisms. The Viennese Arnold Schönberg is exactly a contemporary of the English Holst, but in point of æsthetic conditions they are separated by many generations. The musical air into which Schönberg was born was super-saturated. It was a labour to breathe. It seems to have brought on a quasi-paralysis, inhibiting the normal free gestures. Such a tropically luxuriant and crowded scene appears to be as forbidding to the would-be creative mind as the desert itself. From all over Europe we seem to be hearing a cry of "Oh, for room to breathe!" whereas with us until quite lately the wail was, "In this wilderness is there no living soul to hear my uplifted voice?"

The oppressiveness of the desert must have weighed on the principal English composers of the past generation, or at least we often gather as much from their works. That group of distinguished men, chief of whom were Parry and Stanford, left musical England

in a very much more dignified position than they had found it in, and however infrequently their compositions may be brought to hearing it would be unpardonable to fail in respect towards their names, associated as they are with splendid didactic achievements. It looks to us as though the very obviousness of their own superiority stood in their way as artists. In a generation that was only a remove from one that had been positively unmusical they felt called on not so much to produce the quintessence of the music that was in them as to make a general demonstration to their world of the existence of good music. Such men made clearings in the wilds which rendered later harvests possible.

The lapsing of earlier cultivations is a great curiosity. In the musical field, unlike that of our literature, no continuity of traditions has been maintained. During several generations we had the uninteresting habit of absorbing other people's music without giving a sign of being stimulated. In the century and a half after Purcell's death the art of music was practised fairly busily in one way or another. As a market at all events, London counted more or less considerably in the lives of a succession of great composers, Handel, Haydn, Mozart, Beethoven and Mendelssohn, not to speak of a son and a grandson of J. S. Bach. But in all that time the creative impulse remained extremely feeble—a puzzling discrepancy.

The revival in the 19th century was slow enough. Genius, after all, is a collaboration between a man and his circumstances, and the talents that cropped up were not of the right robust sort to be matched against a too forbidding world. Balfe might, as a Milanese, or Sterndale Bennett as a Leipziger, conceivably have found the climate that would have matured them successfully. But something that looks like luck counts in the achieving of genius, as no one better proved than Sullivan—Sullivan, who so far from scoring by the force of the sheer music within him might have been forgotten as one of half-a-dozen authors of bad cantatas, ballads and anthems, if he had not hit upon his happy outlet in the operettas of Gilbert with whom he entertained charmingly the whole nation. Sullivan, like some others, had delightful gifts, but he had too, unlike all the others, the luck. His "Savoy" music was nothing if not eclectic. It was ignorant neither of Donizetti nor of Mendelssohn; it remembered Dibdin, "The Beggar's Opera" and perhaps even Purcell and Morley. In the result this music is pure Sullivan (the cantatas are the impure), and a lasting delight. While there were in the 1880's more weighty musicians in England working in more arduous fields no one else was as felicitous. This comparatively lowly artist enjoyed as no one else did what we may call the accident of genius, such an accident as "the time and place and the loved one, all together."

This leads to the suggestion that, the English public of the time being what it was, the very "lowliness" of Sullivan's art was a radical part of his genius. Though the musical public may not always get the music, as the larger community is said to get the government, it deserves, it certainly cannot expect to raise within its own borders a music beyond what itself makes possible. The very existence of music, more than the other arts, depends on the collaboration of the author and a body of executants and recipients. True, our paradoxical century boasts the production of an unreadable and unplayable music. Can this be said really to exist? Music begins, when read, to stir in a dull way, but must come into performance to live in the full sense. Putting the eccentrics aside, composers write to be heard, and what they write is in an important measure governed by what can be performed and what will be listened to. In that measure the community has a share in the making or marring of a man of potential genius. *Making*: because whatever may be true of poets, musicians have to be made as well as born. It is not merely figurative to talk of the genius of an age or a period. Sullivan's genius was a success of his England, and the comparative frustration of a Parry was equally a national reproach. From the light nature of the one probably all the music was yielded up. We were saying a moment ago how the other was driven to didactics.

. . . . Romantic spirits like to think of artistic genius as springing on us miraculously from the blue. Only love, not the muses, did that. If we are going to define an artist, his sources have to be traced, whatever the damage to the miraculous theory or fancy. No artist was ever self-made, and the more substantially made one is the greater have been the contributions of others to his witness. Dante contains all the thinking and aspirations of the dark ages. The work of Bach was prepared for, the material hewn for him, by generations of the nameless. How can it be a derogation to look into an artist's origins when all art is in its very nature derivative? This is not to say imitative. In the sources to which it turns superior genius tells as much as in anything. Youth imitates. But not till his prime is over does the grown artist cease to take advantage of the influences he feels to be invigorating. He may find what he wants in the music of his immediate inheritance; or he may turn his back on it—abandon it as an exhausted vein while others are still hammering there—and dart away into space or time for the refreshment of his means of expression.

Multitudes of artists have helped in the accomplishing of any given work of art. "Bards of passion and of mirth, Ye have left your souls on earth!" The immortal spirits are in the air, and fondly we may wonder whether they are chosen by, or themselves may choose,

the vessel of their reincarnation. Serious spirits may, it would seem, return, ready for any sort of frolic. Frustrated spirits may come into triumphant fulfilment. There will never, till our earth is like the frozen moon, be an end of their permutations, but the rules of their being remain very mysterious. By what order or chance was the body of a Bizet or a Musorgsky briefly but gloriously visited? Another—a Schönberg, say—will be distracted and overwhelmed by the spiritual invasion.

At about the same time that Bach's influence began to act again on German minds a singular Englishman, Robert Lucas Pearsall, found himself affected by the Elizabethan madrigalists. Pearsall came too soon or too late. He might have been a complete Elizabethan. His madrigals are not music of his own time, but simply hark back to another century. This is not one of the normal permutations of the timeless spirit. The changed conditions and fresh factors should, we feel, collaborate in the reincarnation to produce some new thing. Pearsall's work is too nearly anachronism or pastiche. He still remains a curious and attractive figure, one who if he had come three-quarters of a century later might in the company of Ralph Vaughan Williams and Gustav Holst have found himself as much at home as he would have been in the London of 1600. Pearsall's is clearly a case of a pronounced musical talent blighted by unpropitious surroundings. English music was beginning to show a little increased vitality in the 1820's and 1830's, but it was still low. Though Pearsall was visited by a singing spirit there was to be found nothing in the air with which it could chime. His youth in England (he was born in 1795 and went to Germany in 1825) fell in the period of the last decline of the music of pomp. The charming dawn of that music is represented to us in Purcell. Handel stands of course for its glorious noon. The rest of that day dragged itself out rather tediously here, but things were very different abroad. In Germany a youth like Pearsall, a few years younger than Weber, a year or two older than Schubert, could not have missed the new romantic light. There was no gleam of it here; only a stale Handelianism, which must have seemed rather *vieille perruque* to a musical youth at a time when exciting things like Byron's poems and Waverley novels were hot and fresh in the booksellers' shops. Pearsall was already 30 when he went to Germany and he remained an English composer. The obvious course—Weberish romanticism—did not attract him then; he took the eccentric one of attachment to the Elizabethans. For that he is thought of with curious sympathy to-day when that path has again been tried, this time more fruitfully.

It is hackneyed to call the Elizabethan age of our music golden, but that after all does represent the aspect it wears for us—radiant,

idyllic, the May-time of art. Half-mythical!—so rapidly did it pass, leaving the smallest of traces on the succeeding music. The forces behind art are like that, relentless. The happiest moments are the least spun out. Is a balance struck? It must straightway be upset and a new attempt made—"Another race to be and other palms to win." Still we wonder at the denseness of the cloud that descended on the Elizabethan composers. When has there been another case of a whole school—and what a school!—being engulfed by a change of fashion? Not that the practice of its work ever quite died out. The Church, not methodically but simply in its natural conservatism, kept a small handful of the old services and anthems in use. A stronger thread, if we are looking for musical continuity, is in the history of English choral clubs and societies, which in one way or another have managed pretty well not to drop Morley and Orlando Gibbons for about 300 years.

A slight enough thread. No one prized it in particular or took it into general account till long after Pearsall's death. But there it was, and its existence seems now to have a cheering significance. A music that was wanted here—a music which lived because there was room in the world precisely for its sort! Such a demand is the composer's incitement, and out of it springs the normal creation of new music—which from time to time may include a masterpiece. But in England for generations the masterpieces have come over to us—have imposed themselves by sheer wondrousness—ready-made, with no hint of the manner of their procreation. The "St. Matthew Passion" and Berlioz's Requiem, "Aida" and "The Nibelung's Ring" were sprung on us—corresponding to no existing requirement, but on their sheer intrinsic worth necessarily welcomed, and hence fitted up here in some more or less adequate frame. We perform such works of music, for we cannot do without them, but why they are what they are—that is only to be explained by their time and place of origin. In isolation they are prodigious phenomena, like this or that strange beast or gorgeous fowl in Regent's Park—creatures whose singularities are perfectly appropriate to the distant life of jungle and coral strand.

The London musical scene indeed cannot escape comparison with the "Zoo"—alive as it is with splendid or bizarre importations, for the most part unacclimatisable and largely accompanied by the necessary professional attendants, much as the "Zoo" elephants bring with them their own mahouts. So long has this been so, that a good part of the public is used to regard the endless exotic parade as the normal life of music, and has no notion of an art related to usual things—an art growing from roots and belonging naturally to the landscape. There exists a simple and rather vulgar preference, in places, for music as a detached oddity come from

heaven knows where, expensive, decorative and unimportant like the floral tributes at funerals and social functions. Only a slightly lower form of this idle, irrational wonder at music is the interest caused by merely freakish exhibits, such as infant performers. The adult taste cannot be indefinitely amused by irrelevancies. The really serious factor in the desire for an art that shall be "national" comes from a distaste for the illogical jumble of cosmopolitan exhibitions. They make us gape, then they make us yawn, and we return to a liking for the beauty which is explicable on the grounds of a natural fitness to exist in a given place.

For music is not the unlocalised Ariel which its intangibility of substance has sometimes led to its being taken for. In some states of exile it can be uglier than anything else. One has known a Welsh Musical Festival to begin with the overture to "La Gazza Ladra" played on brass bands. There are miscellaneous concerts to be heard in London which resemble nothing so much as the shreds of fur and feathers on the pegs of a woman's wardrobe—trophies of what massacres of sentient beings from distant climes! The works of music have all their precisely definite home in place and time, and we hear them truly in the measure to which circumstances of performance and our knowledge, imagination and inner ear can restore to them their first state of being and their historical explanation and relationships. A great deal more than the simple sensuous ear is at work in the intelligent appreciation of one of the masterpieces of far away and long ago; it is part of the cultivated listener's faculty to give them back their home, more or less.

The great masterpieces impose on us the cultivation of that faculty as they impose on the performers a serious attempt at reconstitution. As for a multitude of the charming minor things of music, they can do nothing but pine in exile. To realise how much the mobility of music has been exaggerated one has only to consider an opera of Bellini, a symphony of Bruckner. The one has lost what hold it had here, the other never gained a hold at all. Yet both flourish in their native places, and moreover the visitor, when thereabouts, quite heartily falls in with "Norma" at Naples or a Bruckner symphony at Vienna. It may have seemed tiresome before, but there the work is found to chime in interestingly with the whole. The town and its tradition have wanted this music and have kept a place for it. And such an agreement is so attractive that wherever we go it is the special local music we all like to seek out and not the universal supplies. "Carmen" in Berlin would never do, nor Beethoven's quartets in Sicily. The traveller from London (from New York *a fortiori*) is particularly pleased at finding some special musical demand existing here or there, because at home such a thing is rarely

heard of in the demands which are so busily stimulated to meet all the exotic supplies.

Though the masterpieces may make a universal appeal, not one was wrought with the intention of universality. Every one sprang from a special tradition, and was formed for a local usage. This much applies to all good music. The deliberately universal music, that is of the theatres of variety and the dancing-halls, is inconsiderable; its universality consumes it, and though it can speed round the world in a year it is universally hated by the time it has spread to its starting point.

How the virtue of a masterly piece of music may be modified by mere distance was brought home to a young Englishman in an experience which the passage of a good many years has not dimmed. In a small Wurtemberg town, in a friendly old timber house where there was some sort of home-made music on most evenings, the sounds of which memory mostly fuses with the various musty odours of rambling dwelling and tortuous "Gassen," it chanced that the daughter of the house sang a song of Schumann, the well-known "Widmung." Schumann himself would have been well in place there, sitting taciturn in a dark corner of the panelled room, and he would not have failed to be touched by the sweet, true voice any more than by the gleam of the singer's hair, of the lightest corn-colour, in the lamplight. She sang the confident and expansive song of bridal love which (as we did not know then) was never to be for her. The next year there were to be no more songs. But the sudden point, that long-ago night, for the English visitor to the family circle was—how exactly the song belonged there (a song which at home had been thought hackneyed though beautiful, and also decidedly sentimental)—how naturally the words and the tune came to the lips of the simple and earnest girl, how an unsuspected truth in the music was brought out by the harmony of the surroundings, from the singer's bright undermined beauty to the dark rustic carving on the high cupboard doors round the old room.

There is indeed a circumscription about the works of art, limiting the vividness and the heat of their effect. Beauty is everlasting and at the same time ever changing. The passion of the artist is dimmed by the leagues and the years—otherwise there would be no breathing-space for a new poetry or a new music in Europe.

RICHARD CAPELL.

ENGLISH MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS IN THE MUSEUM OF THE BRUSSELS CONSERVATOIRE

THE Brussels Conservatoire is acknowledged to have the finest museum in the world except that of Charlottenberg. There is no need for me to bring it to the notice of the musical public of England, for among the English tourists who are interested in musical matters, there are few who pass through Belgium without inspecting this famous collection. Perhaps I should rather say "without *wishing* to inspect it"; for the museum is very inconveniently installed, in some thirty small rooms, and the curator's work is the more difficult from the fact that few of the exhibits are in glass cases, so that only about a fifth part of the collection can be properly seen. This arrangement used to be the despair of Victor Mahillon, who founded the collection in 1877, and who continued in charge of it till his death, which took place last year.

The museum of the Brussels Conservatoire contains about a hundred instruments of English make, the names of which may interest English readers. In drawing up the list, I shall only have to take the catalogue compiled by Victor Mahillon and to make short extracts from the notes relating to the different instruments, grouping them according to their different classes. The catalogue of Mahillon comprises five volumes, a total of over 2,300 pages. It is of unquestioned authority; the scholarship, the completeness, and the originality of the information contained in it, show it to be the work of a master. There is, however, one inevitable drawback. The instruments having been catalogued one by one as they came into the museum, the same classes have had to be begun again and again at different times, and research is thereby made difficult to a degree. It was this, in fact, which suggested my making the following extracts. I shall keep to the instruments belonging to Great Britain and Ireland, omitting those, fairly numerous, of the Dominions and the Colonies. By way of example, I may mention the Hindu instruments, a hundred in number, presented by the Rajah Sourindro Mohun Tagore (a relation of Rabindranath Tagore) to King Leopold II, who sent them to the

Conservatoire. It was these instruments that formed the nucleus of the collection.

(a) *Keyboard Instruments.*

Class I. Virginals, Harpsichords, Pianos.

Most of our instruments of English origin belong to this category. (The numbers quoted are those of the catalogue.)

No. 1,591. A rectangular virginal. Compass, 4 octaves and a third, white notes of boxwood. On the under side of the cover is a naïf painting of Orpheus charming the animals. The stand is decorated with painted flowers and birds. On the turn-down flap in front of the cover a "sea-piece." The case has round it embossed paper and painted decoration bearing the Arms of England and the initials E.R. Mahillon rightly interpreted these to mean "Elizabeth Regina," but he could not see the connection between the name of Good Queen Bess (who died in 1608) and the date of the instrument. The key of the mystery has been given to me quite lately by the eminent musicologist and collector, the Rev. Francis Galpin, of Faithbourne, Essex. The reference is not to Elizabeth of England, but to Elizabeth Stuart,* who as a daughter of James the First had the right to bear the Royal Arms.

No. 1,604. Harpsichord, inscribed *Burkat, Shudi, and Johann Broadwood. No. 691. Londini fecerunt, 1778. Patent.* Two keyboards, trichord. Four rows of jacks. There are two pedals, one of which opens a Venetian swell. This again is a very interesting instrument. According to the registers of the firm, it was a present from Frederic II to Marie-Thérèse.

No. 1,610. Harpsichord of Ferdinand Weber, Dublin, date 1751.

No. 1,625. Square piano of Johann Pohlman, London, date 1775.

No. 279. Ditto of Gabriel Buntebart and Sievers, London, date 1790.

No. 1,636. Grand piano, by Broadwood, date 1810.

No. 1,629. Ditto, by Broadwood.

* Elizabeth Stuart married Frederic, Elector Palatine, in 1613. He became King of Bohemia in 1619. But only a few months afterwards the royal pair were forced to escape from the country, and they settled at the Hague, where Frederic died in 1630. Elizabeth continued to live a life of privation in Holland till, in 1661, her nephew, Charles II, invited her to return to England, where she also died the following year. Mr. Galpin considers that our Virginal was a present to Elizabeth from her mother, and that it was sold in Holland along with the uncrowned Queen's other possessions when she went over to settle in England.

No. 1632. Upright piano, by Joseph Merlin, London, end of the eighteenth century. Strung obliquely.

No. 1,633. Ditto, by Thomas Tomkinson, London, early nineteenth century.

No. 3,291. Ditto, by Broadwood, date about 1835. The case is arranged in an unusual way—hollowed out, so that the player can see what is going on on the other side of the instrument. The museum possesses a good many piano mechanisms which show the successive improvements of this instrument. A number of these are of English make.

No. 1,645. Mechanism, by Zumpe, for the square piano; the starting point of the mechanism called English proper.

No. 1,647. Ditto, by Broadwood, combining the mechanism of Zumpe with that of Cristofori, date 1770.

No. 1,646. Ditto, for the Broadwood grand piano, date 1779.

No. 1,652. Ditto, by Broadwood, perfected by Southwell, date 1837.

No. 1,654. The same, improved by Kind, date 1860.

No. 1,657. Mechanism for Brinsmead grand piano.

Nos. 1,658 and 1,663. Ditto for upright piano, also by Brinsmead.

Class III. Organs.

No. 1,136. A large-sized instrument, with a pedal keyboard and four stops; once belonged to the Prince of Orange, afterwards William III. Mahillon considers that it must be of English make.

No. 1,128. Organ piano, by Longman and Broderip. The piano has a compass of 5 octaves; no pedals, but four sets of pipes. The organ has 54 pipes half-stopped, which represent a single stop. The two instruments can be played together or separately.

Class IV.

Metal instrument made to vibrate by means of friction.

Terpodion, by Loeschman and Allwright, date 1821. A metal cylinder coated with a resinous substance is rotated by means of a pedal. There is a keyboard, and when a key is depressed a small pad of felt presses on the cylinder and causes a length of brass wire to vibrate.

Bowed Instruments.

Curiously enough, this very important class has few English representatives in the museum.

A bass viol, No. 1,431, marked Magini k. 30, has been identified

by Mr. A. Hill as being really the work of Edward Levis, London, beginning of the eighteenth century.

No. 487. Bass viol* with sympathetic strings, Francis Baker, 1696.

No. 377. Viol bridge, open work carving, by Hill.

Nos. 1,450-1,456. Set of bridges (*chevalets*) with four feet to equalise the volume of sound, by J. Edwin Bonn, at Brading, I. of Wight.

(c) *Instruments with plucked strings.*

I. Harps.

No. 1,502. A pretty plaster cast of King Brian Boru's famous harp (eleventh century) preserved in Dublin, given by Trinity College, Dublin.

No. 1,510. *Telin*. Large Welsh harp with 8 sets of strings, given to the museum by a maker of harps, Mr. J. G. Morley, London.

No. 1,501. *Clarseach*. Irish harp, early nineteenth century, charmingly ornamented with wreaths of golden shamrock on a green ground.

II. Fingerboard Instruments.

Nos. 261 and 1,552. *Cistre*. English guitar, invented by Christian Claus and Co., London, in the year 1784. The instrument has 12 strings and it has also on the left side of the body a little keyboard which plays on the strings by means of hammers.

No. 539. Ditto, but with keyboard in the middle instead of at the side.

No. 1,556. *Cistre* with 10 strings; pegs turned with a key.

No. 1,553. Guitar with two fingerboards. Pretty decoration of mother-of-pearl and tortoiseshell. By Rauche, London, 1766.

No. 1550. Harp-guitar. Guitar with six strings, combined with a harp of 31 strings.

No. 1551. Harp-lute. Invented by Edward Light (early nineteenth century) by the name of British harp-lute, and improved in the year 1828 by Ventura, an Italian settled in London, who gave his name to the mechanism.

(d) *Wind Instruments.* (These are particularly numerous.)

I. Flutes.

No. 1,038. Tenor, marked E. Verton.

No. 1,984. Flageolet with one key, by Power, of London.

Nos. 1,994, 1,995, 1,996. Three Flageolets with six holes. One is

* Engraved with the name J. B. Simon (Mahillon, p. 468).

of zinc, one of copper, the third has a lateral blowhole which makes it look like a German flute.

Double Flageolet. This instrument is essentially English; the principle is ingenious, it recalls the *Diaulos* of the Greeks, in that it allows of a duet being played by a single performer. One mouthpiece is common to the two parallel pipes. Each one has its own holes and its keys; but there is a contrivance which allows either pipe to be silenced, so that each one can be played separately.

Nos. 440 and 2,364. Ditto. Marked Bainbridge and Wood. The ivory fipple is shaped in the same way as the reed of the oboe. One of these pipes has seven holes and three keys; the other, five holes and six keys.

No. 1,819. Another pattern. William Bainbridge, 1819. It is played by means of a little pipe placed laterally. The instrument was therefore held obliquely.

Nos. 208 and 1,047. Yet another pattern, the first by Metzlor, the second probably by Bainbridge.

No. 1,038. German flute, with one key, Astor and Horwood, London.

No. 3,128. Ditto, by Garret.

No. 3,129. Boehm flute, by Collard and Co. (Collard* was a flautist and a maker of flutes).

No. 225. Ditto, by Barret, flautist and maker of flutes; a Frenchman established in London, died 1879.

No. 1,070. German flute (bass), by Wigley and Macgregor, 1810. Owing to the great length of this flute, nearly 4 ft. (1.19 metres), the head has been doubled back.

No. 2,376. Flute in G, by Rudall and Rose, London.

II. Instruments with single beating reed.

No. 1,957. Clarinet with 6 keys, by G. Astor, London.

No. 1,960. Ditto with 13 keys, and with various improvements, by Rudall, Rose, Carte and Co.

No. 3,265. Clarinet with 13 keys, by Boosey and Co.; mechanism by Boosey, 1894; modification of a mechanism by E. Albert, of Brussels, 1866.

No. 944. Tenoroon. This instrument is very interesting because it determines an important point in the history of the manufacture of

* Note by translator.—His surname was really Drake, not Collard. I used to hear of him as a very fine workman. He had some composition of his own invention for the tube of his flutes, supposed to be an improvement on ebonite. He was an enthusiastic inventor. We possess two flutes made by him, date about 1897.

musical instruments. It is a tube with conical bore, furnished with a beating reed, like that of the clarinet. This is well known as the principle of the Saxophone—that fine instrument patented by Adolphe Sax in the year 1846. Now the tenoroon in question bears an inscription to the effect that it belonged to one Lazarus of the Royal Military Hospital at Chelsea, and it has been ascertained that the aforesaid Lazarus had already left the institution in 1821. The principle of the Saxophone was therefore made use of in England long before the year 1846. Mahillon draws attention, besides, to the fact that the prudent Sax did not claim priority for his idea.

No. 945. Saxophone by Rudall, Rose, Carte and Co.

III. Instruments with double reed.

No. 1,979. "Oboe de Caccia" (Pommer alto) with 2 keys, marked William Gatlum.

No. 1978. Oboe with 2 keys; no mark, but apparently of English make.

No. 966. Ditto with 3 keys, by G. Miller.

No. 996. Bassoon in G with 6 keys, by Cahusac, London.

IV. Instruments with mouthpiece.

These are especially numerous. We must head the list with the slide-trumpet, which had an importance in the construction of English musical instruments, rather surprising when we consider what an inconvenient type of instrument it was. It is now obsolete, while the slide-trombone is restored to favour. The English slide-trumpet was made specially by J. Kohler at the suggestion of a well-known English trumpeter, Thomas Harper, professor at the Royal Academy of Music and holding the title of sergeant-trumpeter to the Household 1816-1898. Harper caused this instrument to be made with numerous crooks which he used in combination.

Our slide-trumpets, Nos. 1,254 and 2,457, are by Kohler.

No. 3,256. Slide-trumpet, by W. Wyatt, used at the Kneller Hall School of Military Music, where this instrument was taught as lately as the year 1893.

No. 3,157. Ditto, by J. Goddison, provided with 7 crooks, circular in shape, fitting one into the other in a way that makes the instrument look unusual and almost ridiculous.

No. 2,429. Cavalry trumpet in use about 1880.

No. 3,158. Bass slide-trombone, by Rudall, Carte and Co., with a double slide which halves the length of the slide proper. Has been used at Kneller Hall.

No. 2,454. Ophicleide, Prospere system, made by Nugget. The

instrument is made of wood. This feat was accomplished in deference to the old idea that the tone of wind instruments depends upon the material of which they are made.

There are numerous Cornets à Piston :

No. 3,168. By R. Bradshaw, Dublin (1845).

No. 1,300. De Kohler, system called Kohler's patent lever, suggested by a French patent (1851).

No. 1,296. Gisborne, Birmingham, with a lateral hole which raises the sound by one tone, thus making it possible to play a shake.

No. 1,301. Boosey and Co.; D. J. Blaikley's system, 1878, known as "compensating pistons," considered by Mahillon the nearest approach to a perfect plan for making sure of being in tune.

No. 3,280. Circular hunting horn.

No. 1,272. Tenor bugle of Rudall, Rose, Carte and Co.; G. R. Samson's system (date 1862).

No. 3,166. Ditto of Boosey and Co.; Blaikley's system.

No. 2,022. Bass in B \flat , by Metzler and Co., used by the 15th Middlesex London Scottish Rifle Volunteers.

Nos. 2,023, 2,024. Sonorophones in E \flat , by Metzler and Weddel, 1858, used in the same regiment.

No. 1,228. Bass horn, by Frederic Pace, brass, V-shaped, 6 holes and 2 keys.

No. 2,455. Bugle horn, by Jos. Greehill; English infantry bugle with 6 keys.

No. 3,168. Regulation infantry bugle.

No. 1,148. Hunting horn, by Swaine and Co.

No. 1,154. Forester's horn (curved in a semi-circle).

No. 2,446. Mute for horn, invented by W. O. Yorke, of Blackpool, with an opening that can be enlarged at pleasure by means of a diaphragm.

V. Percussion, popular and fancy instruments.

No. 3,105. Bass Drum, marked T. Key (a former maker of membranous instruments) (instruments à membrane). It has been used by the 7th Queen's Own Hussars, the Queen's Regiment, in the time of George III. It is a historical souvenir, the instrument having been picked up on the field of Waterloo.

No. 1,952. Tambour de Basque (Tambourine).

No. 3,171. Violin, made of iron (!), English mark partly effaced.

No. 2,514. Auto-musician—a sort of æolian harp—in the form of a case which contains 12 strings, and with an opening to let in the air. Devised by R. W. Keith, the successor of Longman and Broderip.

- No. 202. Pan Pipes, with 13 reed pipes.
- No. 1,105. Ditto, 24 pipes.
- No. 2,052. Kazoo, reed pipe (mirliton).
- No. 1,126. Bagpipe with 4 pipes—"chanter" and 3 drones.
- No. 3,113. Chanter, for practising. Similar to the last, but with the stopped pipes so as to diminish the volume of sound.
- No. 1,123. Ullean piobe. Bagpipe provided with bellows worked by the elbow, instead of a mouthpiece with pipe. The left arm presses on the reservoir to expel the air. A chanter and 3 drones.
- No. 903. Shell (snail), with a small reed pipe in interior.
- Nos. 2,308, 2,309. Paper cylinders (cornets) with beating reed (anche battante) enclosed in a cardboard tube, decorated with the English colours; popular toy used in the streets of London when peace was declared after the war in the Transvaal (May 31, 1902).
- No. 1,982. *Whit horn*. Rustic hautboy used in certain Oxfordshire villages to announce the hunting of the roedeer, which the inhabitants could follow of right on Whit Monday. The instrument is made of a single strip of bark, rolled up spirally, and provided with a double reed. It is a curious thing that instruments made in just the same way are used in Flanders, in Russia, and in Japan.
- Nos. 1,944, 1,945. Jew's Harp, or Jew's Trump.
- No. 1,939. Bone Castanets (Knicky Knackers), used by the Christy Minstrels.
- No. 886. Tubular Bells, on the system of John Harrington, of Coventry, 1888.

ERNST CLOSSON.

Translated by L. P. WYATT EDGELL.

ACOUSTIC EXPERIENCES WITH COMMENTS

PART I.—Reflections on Acoustics, by Alexandre Cellier (Organist to the Bach Society, Paris).

PART II.—Some Notes on M. Cellier's Observations, by Hope Bagenal (Lecturer in Acoustics at the Architectural Association Schools).

I.

THE multiplicity of causes capable of affecting acoustics makes the question more complex and renders it difficult to elaborate the definite and simple data which would permit of a sure solution of the difficulties. In spite of all theoretical foresight, if an architectural result does not correspond to what was expected, what is to be done? To find his work saved by success or damned by failure is a fearful dilemma for a builder.

We will examine the causes at work.

Singers—most exacting people as regards the place in which they are to exhibit their art—complain alike of a room too dull and of one too sonorous; and they are quite right, for *in medio est veritas*, we need not consider their superstitions and illusions, above all, their unjustifiable complaints when, as too frequently happens, it is not the room that causes the trouble. Nevertheless, the voice being pre-eminently the *living sound*, we must take into account their impressions of emission, as well as those of the listeners, for, only too often the singer and listener have diametrically opposed impressions.

Many a time have I noticed that a sound which appears feeble to singer or instrumentalist, and seems to escape, as it were, from his lips, his bow, or his fingers, is in reality the sound which carries best and even gains volume in the room. On the other hand, a sound which is loud and forced in emission will not reach beyond the foot-lights. This remark applies equally to what may be put down to singer and player and to what depends on the acoustics of the room. We will take a few examples:

1. It has been proved that voices which seem large when we are near have never succeeded in large buildings, such as the opera, or in large churches, whereas voices of small volume but perfect quality carried admirably.

2. Violins of delicate and clear sound, like the Italian, are heard far better than all others above an accompanying orchestra.

3. Certain pianos, which give the player the pleasure of a round tone, will, when in rivalry with an orchestra, be heard best from a distance.

4. Organs whose sonority is best at a distance are just those whose stops do not immediately give the player the impression of great volume, but rather the feeling that the sound is lost. The organ of La Trinité, in Paris, is one of the best I could quote. On the other hand, the mediocre instrument at the Conservatoire, which always appears too loud to the organist, gives a poor, paltry sound in the hall itself, not because of the acoustics, but because of its faulty position at the top of the stage and too far back. A harmonium also, whose sound sometimes drowns neighbouring performances, is thin and lacking in volume at a distance.

We must mistrust a room, too, which gives the player the feeling of too loud a sound, and accept as the indispensable condition of a good effect in the room an imperfect perception of the effect at the actual console.

According to the size of the building we must also vary the rate at which music is taken: When the space is small the movement ought to be more rapid. On the other hand, in a large room or a sonorous building the movement must be slower if confusion is to be avoided. Good organists, singers, leaders of orchestras and performers in general possess a certain sense of immediate adaptation.

We will now deal with two points of the first importance: *Materials* and the form of the building.

Materials.—As in the preliminary considerations just mentioned, we must now consider the influence of the materials on sound at its departure and at its arrival.

Departure of Sound.—It is not only necessary that sound should be directed, thrown forward and consequently amplified at the start, but that the surfaces surrounding the place of emission should consist of matter that is hard, smooth, straight, devoid of hollows and rugged surfaces. It is almost superfluous to speak of the proved necessity of having a floor that forms a sound-board, with an adequate vacuum below, seeing that wood possesses all requisite qualities, which I shall mention shortly. It may be said in passing that the ancient theatre of Pompeii also had a wood floor.

To prove the rationale of polished surfaces, we have heard of singers who claim that it is good to sing near a mirror; certain organ pipes also carry better when backed by a hard surface. An impression I have frequently had—one that is shared by a well-known pianoforte

maker—is that polished grand pianos have more sound and carry better than waxed pianos, because of the hardness of the varnish and of its polish, which are preferable to the dullness and softness of wax. Experiments may be made on stringed instruments where varnish plays so important a part.

Reception of Sound.—It is logical that a good room should be a little too sonorous when empty, for we must take into consideration the "padding" effect introduced by the public. We may here call to mind what Handel said one day when his attention was called to the empty seats: "Splendid! My music will sound all the better!" While admiring such optimism, we must dread the room that is too good at rehearsals and give credit to the one which is not. I remember a certain orchestra rehearsal on the stage of the Odéon, which was not only empty but had the orchestra pit open. The sound was blurred and confused, somewhat resembling—in the domain of optics—the vision obtained by an opera-glass out of focus. The result was dreadful! But when the concert took place the acoustics were as perfect as could be desired!

Again, in churches too opulent in stone surfaces, we have noted the stabilising effect produced by the public. At Saint Eustache, where the sonority of the organ was blurred when the church was empty, I have heard with wonderful clearness at midnight mass the effect of any chance stop, and that is the only time in the year when the church is full to overflowing. At Sainte-Clotilde also, I never heard the organ sound better than on the occasion of the unveiling of the monument to César Franck, when the naves were absolutely packed. A somewhat observant organist is fully aware of the differences caused by the varying numbers of listeners.

Excess of "padding" is equally disastrous, and large funeral hangings in churches have a terrible effect on both voices and instruments. It is less bad if there are no hangings near the organ. In rooms too plentifully supplied with carpets or curtains the musical emission is not good either.

Now we will speak of the materials themselves, beginning with the most classic of all: stone and wood.

According to the opinion of qualified specialists, stone ought to be dry and hard if it is to afford good acoustics; this is quite comprehensible when considered in connection with the necessity of having matter which is hard and polished, as we have already seen. Moisture, whether in the atmosphere or in the material itself, will always be disastrous; the most convincing proof of this is seen in the fact that certain rooms clearly improve with the flight of time once the material used in their construction has become thoroughly dried.

Stuffing or soft material is not so good. I do not believe that temporary exhibitions have ever supplied rooms favourable for music. Brick, very good when solid as in the old churches, is detestable when hollow; consider the case of modern houses!

As regards the use of wood, we could not emphasise its advantages better than by quoting the following lines, written with reference to the performance of the "Adonis" of Boesset, in 1660, in the large State chamber of the Louvre:

"Musicians affirm that in the whole of Paris there is no place more favourable to soft music; they attribute the cause of this to the timber of the ceiling, of the wainscot, and of each casement. They feel convinced that stone covings are less good for sound than wooden, experience having taught them that stone receives the human voice with far more echo and reflection than does wood."

Indeed, I have always considered that wood, in the too few concert halls where it is the main element of construction, gives the best quality of sound—clear, without dryness, and not too penetrating. Besides, as was seen in 1660, wood does not reflect the sound with echoes; it seems rather to give a sort of soft delicacy, a penetrating *morbidezza*. Is not the concert hall of the Société des Concerts du Conservatoire, which possesses these very qualities, composed of wood, both on the stage and throughout the interior? We are also acquainted in Paris with a salon of remarkable acoustics which is wainscoted from floor to ceiling. Has it not been asserted that the old Opéra of the Rue Le Peletier, a temporary structure of wood, was excellent? And all the old concert halls which were built principally of wood?

One of the best buildings with which I am acquainted both for the human voice and for "soft music" is the Protestant church of Le Locle in Switzerland; it is of very simple architecture, with wooden pulpits and pews, but it has the characteristic of being provided with a ceiling that consists entirely of wood simply nailed on to the beams. These support a lofty roofing that acts as a sort of sounding box.

To conclude as regards the materials which affect sound, we may mention a curious process used at the Salle du Palais de l'Industrie, in Amsterdam. This consists in stretching a great number of threads of cotton, which are scarcely visible, over the upper portion of the hall, for the purpose of toning down the excessive resonance. A like method has been employed at the new Conservatoire by extending nets from the ceilings of certain class rooms, but as these rooms are fundamentally imperfect, because of materials far too resonant in themselves, they are still as unsuitable for music as the entire Conservatoire itself: an error which finally proved more expensive than building a structure really suited for the purpose in hand.

Form.—Here we are encroaching on dangerous ground. There is a certain amount of agreement as to the appropriateness of the materials, but far less as to the shape and form of the rooms themselves. Charles Garnier who, when engaged on the Opéra, conscientiously studied and examined everything dealing with acoustics, at last fell into a state of ironical scepticism, and, naturally, like every self-respecting sceptic, he turned empiric, and reproduced to the best of his ability the Salle de la Rue Le Peletier; and, indeed, he was quite right, for, considering its size, the Opéra possesses excellent acoustic properties.

Not being an architect I shall run no risk in reviewing all kinds of forms, and as there is neither one form that is strictly and invariably good nor another that is irremediably bad, they will be mainly particular cases that we must examine, in an attempt to draw logical deductions from the whole of the facts under consideration.

It appears to be generally recognised that the most prudent form to give a room is that of a rectangle, the fact of being rounded off at one or both extremities being of little importance.

The Salle Pleyel, a very good one, is frankly rectangular; certain salons and small concert rooms with which I am acquainted are equally good. On the other hand, in a square room one often has the impression that the sound remains stationary and does not develop normally. Still, it would be unwise to generalise, for there are many halls—very satisfactory, if not altogether excellent—which are almost square. In other respects, however, these halls possess a number of qualities that contribute to good acoustics, thus tending to prove what we claimed at the outset—the multiplicity of causes that complicate the question.

If, then, the rectangular form is not the only one which has given good results, and seeing that the theatres do not adopt it, may we not agree in deprecating, at all events, a predominance of round surfaces, especially of concave surfaces in those parts of the hall which reflect the sound, and particularly in places far away from the public, such as ceilings and the upper parts of walls? It is worth mentioning that the architect of the Salle Erard, acting upon the advice of the Cavallé-Coll organ maker, avoided round surfaces, even on the ceiling, whereas the platform, on the other hand, is convex in form. We find that this hall, rather too sonorous when not well filled, by reason of its excessive height and resonant surface, is none the less very good when this excess is corrected by an overflow audience. At all events, they have avoided the echoes and distortions which one deplures, for instance, in the stations of the Métropolitain, which are not only concave but are parabolic, and in those churches where round surfaces predominate, etc. As a special example we may cite the

Protestant church of Chaux-de-Fonds, oval in form, in which there is no straight surface, so to speak, the result being a most disastrous echo. The too famous Salle du Trocadéro is certainly indebted for its echoes to the concave surfaces of walls and ceiling; in proof of this assertion we will quote the conclusion of an article in *La Nature* dealing with works undertaken by M. Gustave Lyon that have modified the echoes without suppressing them altogether, which would have called for far more important modifications:

"The lesson to be learned from these works is that, in large halls, surfaces far away from the audience should be absorbent, whereas those situated near the audience should be of a reflecting character. Moreover, it is wise to reject junction surfaces that are concave, as they produce echoes and resonances. The theatres of antiquity fully confirm these conclusions, for, as the roof is absent, there existed no reflecting surface far away from the spectators. On the other hand, the stalls were of stone, and frequently the spectators reclined in regular parabolic cylinders."

Apropos of the Trocadéro, it is worth while mentioning the opinion of an eminent architect who asserted that the initial fault in construction had been the fact that recognised dimensions were not respected. It is quite evident, in reproducing forms that have been tried and tested, greater or less success follows, but there is always some success. The copy of a Stradivarius is not a Stradivarius, but the chances are that it is a violin.

Churches, however slightly complicated, provided with deep aisles, with chapels, triforia and transepts, in a word, with cavities and round surfaces, produce a confusion of sound which the "padding" provided by the public does not always diminish, as we see, for instance, in the church of Saint-Pierre in Geneva. The Munster of Berne, on the other hand, with straight nave, though neither transept nor triforium, with a clear predominance of solid straight walls, without side chapels and with simple aisles, has perfect acoustics.

This invites the remark that the simplest rooms are the best, and the cavities, projections and highly-polished surfaces are not good for hearing in. We may again quote as examples of simplicity in exterior construction the Salle du Conservatoire, Salle Pleyel, Munster of Berne, Théâtre des Champs-Élysées, Opéra (in less degree), Saint-Sulpice (round surfaces far less numerous than in Gothic churches), etc. On the contrary, seats in recesses or beneath the balcony are not good, any more than those rooms in which there are not sufficient flat and reflecting surfaces.

We may also mention as instances of the advantage of flat surfaces those few churches built in what is called the "English Gothic" style. Their "circumflex accent" ceiling simply reproduces the form

of the outer roof, while their excellence for speaking purposes has been vouched for by eminent preachers. Whilst on the question of ceilings, we may state that both the Salle du Conservatoire and the Salle Pleyel possess a very slightly concave ceiling. In my opinion, this peculiarity contributes to their acoustic excellence, for I have noticed that churches or halls with flat ceilings seem to be responsible for a certain hardness of sound. In a word, while certain arrangements are distinctly bad and to be avoided, both as regards material and form, it must be acknowledged that the multiplicity of contributory causes will not allow us to indicate unvarying proportions any more than the only material to be employed. It would be well, however, to study the form of concert halls without remembering that of theatres, as was the case in the too famous Salle du Conservatoire which in reality consists only of a stage with scenery, while the general furnishing and style undoubtedly belong to the theatre, not to the concert room.

What, finally, are we to conclude from all these deductions, which lay no claim to be scientific and are the result of very incomplete and unmethodical observations? Are we to abandon all thought of mastering the difficulties of the acoustic art, or can we really find, both in the past and in the present, assured bases for our conclusions? We may continue to hope, reflecting that it is but recently, after all, that music, the last comer of all the arts, has made us think of the necessity of building structures for her sole use.

II.

M. Cellier's observations are interesting because they are made by a musician of experience with apparently no knowledge of Sabine's law or of later acoustic theory. Therefore they are valuable as impartial evidence in the task—ininitely difficult for the student of acoustics—of sifting musical preferences and of discovering some consent in general principles.

First M. Cellier draws attention to variations in tone production and in emissive power. Of course, intensity varies with pitch,* but the phenomena he describes are due also to the absorbing conditions of the room. Low pure tones do not carry as far as more complex tones, for well-known acoustic reasons. Tone quality in instruments influences carrying power. Hence the reed voice production of Italian trebles in S. Peter's at Rome, where it is necessary that the direct

* A discussion on emissive power occurs in a paper read by Sabine himself in Paris before the Société Française de Physique during the war, which was published in the *Communication* of that society under date 13.4.17. The paper was entitled: "Some difficulties and possibilities of Acoustic research."

sound shall have great intensity and be able to drown out a very long reverberation. Hence also the interesting fact pointed out by M. Cellier that a solo violin playing in unison with the orchestra in a concerto can be heard distinctly *against* the orchestra even when playing softly. This is probably due also to a deliberate tone contrast given by the soloist.

Tone colour depends on the relative intensity of overtones: but since all the building and lining materials used in a concert room absorb selectively, tone colour must depend directly upon their relative amounts. To give a simple instance from Sabine:

... "given an eight-foot organ pipe, if blown in an empty room, ... the overtones would be pronounced. If exactly the same pipe be blown with the same wind pressure in a room in which the seats have been covered with the elastic felt, the first upper partial will bear to the fundamental a ratio of intensity diminished over 40 per cent., the second upper partial a ratio to the fundamental diminished in the same per cent., the third upper partial a ratio diminished over 50 per cent., while the fourth upper partial will bear a ratio of intensity to the fundamental diminished about 60 per cent. ...

... "On the other hand, if one were to try the experiment with a six-inch instead of with an eight-foot organ pipe, the effect of bringing the elastic felt cushions into the room would be to increase the relative intensities of the overtones, and thus to diminish the purity of the tone."*

A very rough generalisation for the influence of materials on tone can be made as follows:

Thin soft materials such as curtains, and also the patent acoustic tiles and plasters, absorb predominantly in the upper register. Thick soft materials, such as upholstery and carpets, absorb predominantly in the middle register. Wood absorbs predominantly in the lower register and selects over the whole musical scale. Therefore the effect of materials upon the tone of various instruments is to improve or injure its quality according to circumstances. But there is another factor directly bearing upon M. Cellier's points. A soloist, delivering tone to the audience, often does not hear himself well because there is no reflector near enough to give him a little of his own sound at one impact. This is a mistake in planning. A soloist who is surrounded by audience or members of the orchestra is in the worst position for hearing himself. An extreme case is the central auditory of the Crystal Palace; yet a small soloist's rostrum with a 10 ft. square

* W. O. Sabine's *Collected Papers on Acoustics*, p. 32. Variation in reverberation with variations in pitch.

of wood behind or above him would make all the difference to his sense of "power."

The lesson of the Greek orchestra floor space which played a vital part as a reflector in the acoustics of the Greek theatre (and probably of the Greek Odeion) should be taken to heart, and a clear space should be left round a soloist.

In regard to organs, M. Cellier does not make a true comparison in his fourth point. But his remarks reinforce my own opinion that the organ is invariably playing the hall or church while the organist is playing the organ, and if the organist wishes to play both he must dissociate his keyboard from the direct blast of his pipes. Keyboards should be at least 20 feet away.

When M. Cellier says, "According to the size of the building we must also vary the rate at which music is taken," he is recognising Sabine's law of reverberation in terms of musical technique. Reverberation is the central phenomenon of the acoustics of buildings. Stated popularly it is this:

The larger a building the longer time will a sound continue within it after the source has ceased, other things being equal, and also the greater the absorbing power of the room the less time will a sound continue after its source has ceased, other things being equal.

The fact of the prolonging of tones in a building is well known to musicians, but its implication is not generally recognised. If M. Cellier's advice were followed nearly all fugues in large churches would be played at half their rate, and certain large auditories like the Albert Hall would not be used for impact instruments at all.

Reverberation is an energy condition for the whole room, and every surface within it contributes to that condition. It is therefore not to be confused with resonance, which is the response of certain materials and of certain contained volumes of air to tones sympathetic in pitch. A moderate reverberation is vital for good tone in the case of choral and instrumental music. The standard generally accepted is that of the Gewandhaus at Leipzig of from 2 to $2\frac{1}{2}$ seconds with a volume of 400,000 cubic feet.

It is established that for well-trained orchestras having beautiful instruments a reverberation of at least that figure is necessary in order to give real satisfaction to musicians and audience alike. It is not worth while taking finely-toned instruments into a room where reverberation is too short. The results are termed "dull" or "dead."

Since the audience generally is the major absorbing factor in an auditory, it follows that tone varies with the number of persons present, that is to say, it varies as between a rehearsal and the actual

performance. This explains M. Cellier's paragraphs on what Handel said, and generally choral music benefits by a long reverberation. His experiences at the Odéon are an additional recommendation to architects to design a rehearsal curtain in order to cut off volume and provide an adjustable absorbing area to be used when required.

M. Cellier's paragraph on the directing of sound is important, but he is mixing up reinforcing of sound by reflection and by resonance. Sound should be reflected from the neighbourhood of the source by as short a path as possible upon the audience, and rear walls behind the audience should be rendered absorbent. A sound mirror requires to be massive as well as to have a hard surface, otherwise it will reflect high notes and transmit low notes—herein it differs from a light mirror. Reinforcement by resonance is quite another matter. All instruments in contact with a wood floor are reinforced by it. The wooden floor of any concert room, with a 6 in. air space beneath it, should be carried up the walls in the form of panelling, that is to say, the panelling and the floor of platform recess should be in one piece, and will then act like the sounding-board of a grand piano. Wood will respond to tones transmitted through the air alone, but it is much more efficient if in actual contact with the vibrating source. The polishing or varnishing of resonant surfaces modifies and increases its resonating value, hence the importance of the varnish on the bodies of violins and, to a less degree, the polish on grand pianos mentioned by M. Cellier.

M. Cellier's instance of the excellence of musical tone in halls where the wood area is large reinforces my own experience. By means of wood a "brightness" of tone for instruments can be had even when the reverberation is short. In London the Aeolian Hall and Covent Garden Opera House are, in their own kind, instances of this. The Aeolian Hall, with full audience of 500, has a reverberation of only 1.3 seconds, but it has 2,600 square feet of wood panelling in a volume of 84,000 cubic feet.* In my own opinion, though "brightness" of tone can be insured by wood resonators under short reverberation conditions, yet "fullness" of tone (specially necessary for choral music) can *only* be had by a reverberation of at least $2\frac{1}{2}$ seconds. The various materials mentioned by M. Cellier—stone, brick, wood, glass, etc.—have all their various absorbing co-efficients, which are known for one or more regions of pitch, and the influence upon tone of relative amounts can be approximately foreseen. Acoustic tiles and plaster can be had having high absorbing powers, especially in the upper register, and these can be used to control reverberation when

* Aeolian Hall, "Acoustic Analysis," by Mr. Christopher Green, A.R.I.B.A., November, 1925.

tone requirements are definitely known. An equal reduction in treble and bass should be aimed at. In regard to moisture, as a plaster wall dries out its pores become freer, and therefore the whole mass becomes slightly more absorbing, but the variation between wet and dry for ordinary hard plasters is almost imperceptible. The difference between wet and dry states for acoustic plaster, which has a marked porosity, would, on the other hand, be considerable.

I do not believe that treatment of halls either by threads or wires has, or can have, any absorbing value for any but the very highest notes, that is, for notes having the very shortest wave length.

Under the heading of *Form*, M. Cellier's paragraphs are interesting, but a simple fact in acoustics lies at the root of all scientific planning for auditories. The least interval detectable by the human ear is about one fifteenth of a second, and in that time sound (in air of ordinary temperature) will travel between 70 and 80 feet. If, therefore, sound travels by a reflected path longer than the direct path by more than 70 feet, it will convey the sensation of two sounds instead of one. Therefore, in order that the reflected sound should reinforce and not bump the direct sound, no reflected path to any seat should exist having more than this excess of length. If this is worked out logically on drawing paper for ordinary platform requirements, the fan-shaped plan emerges as the best, and gives the greatest number of usefully reflecting surfaces. If a portion of the side walls are turned over to form an overhead splay on section, then all surfaces can be made usefully reflecting except that in the rear of the audience, and upon that rear wall absorbing materials should be concentrated.

As far as I know, Guadet was the first *Beaux Arts* architect to suspect the implications upon auditory design of that interval of one-fifteenth of a second. Certainly Garnier cannot ever have done so or he would not have reproduced in his grand opera the bad old bear-pit theatre form with horse-shoe plan. I do not agree with M. Cellier that the Paris Opéra is good for tone. The reverberation is far too short owing to the cloth linings to the *loges*, there is no proscenium splay, and the height of the ceiling is such that sounds from the orchestra descend upon the stalls half a beat late. As usual in large continental opera houses, the best seats that I tested were right up in the gallery. As an instrument the auditory is not to be compared for tone to Covent Garden, and the reason can easily be read in comparing the sections and linings of the two buildings.

M. Cellier is quite right in deprecating concave surfaces. In all cases where serious echoes occur they are due to the coincidence of long reflected paths with the focussing action of concave surfaces. Both factors are necessary for the violent echo. M. Cellier instances the Salle du Trocadéro, and we can proudly point to Albert Hall,

But a concave ceiling having sufficiently long radius (for instance, double the height of the room) can be used for certain purposes with advantage. For instance, M. Cellier notes that the Salle du Conservatoire and the Salle Pleyel, both excellent for acoustics, have slightly concave ceilings. But, generally speaking, an architect runs considerably less risk by employing plane surfaces rather than curved.

Convex surfaces do not bring sounds to a focus and are therefore not dangerous. Another advantage of the fan-shaped auditory (with absorbents concentrated on rear wall) over the rectangular is that there is considerably less danger of the reinforcing of sound in a certain tonality only. Churches having many cells sharply reinforce certain tones, this is due to the sharpness of resonance of air cavities which differ therein from the resonating character of wood. All this, as M. Cellier says, invites the remark that "the simplest rooms are the best." This is the case. But the old notions that good architectural proportion such as two squares in cube will produce *of themselves* good acoustic conditions are misleading. "Proportion" in acoustic design means the proportion of volume to absorbing power. To-day all English concert rooms won in open competition are cut down in price and therefore in cube, but the maximum seating capacity is insisted upon. This means that reverberation is generally too short for good musical tone. The only remedy for this is wood panelling with air space behind it designed as already described, but the L.C.C. and other local authorities place unnecessary restrictions on account of fire upon the use of wood or of straw-boards designed in this way. Unless freedom for resonating materials is permitted, where fire-proofing is concerned, good acoustic design for concert tone will be rendered impossible. In cases where reverberation plus resonance are specially designed, as in the new Chenil Gallery Hall in Chelsea, excellent tone results can be obtained quite easily.

CORRESPONDENCE

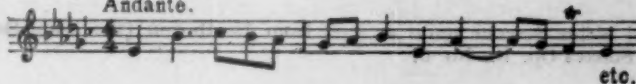
VINCENZO BELLINI

SIR.—It is always fascinating and exciting to tilt at established opinions as Mr. Gray has done in his article on Bellini in the January number of *MUSIC AND LETTERS*. To take a parallel from literature it would be more exhilarating to write, or read, an article on the subject "That Byron was un-Byronic" than to discuss Byron in the orthodox way. Mr. Gray has felt this fascination and, in my own case, the brilliance of his study almost reconciles me to, what I consider, the falseness of his logic.

Briefly, Mr. Gray states that Bellini should be considered not only as a "seminal" force but as a considerable composer. Admittedly a characteristically 19th century melody is different from a typical Beethoven or Mozart melody, but one cannot therefore argue that "the note of ecstasy, of passionate lyricism and elegiac melancholy" found in 19th century melodies was never touched before Bellini. Even suggestions of late 19th century modernisms—whole tone scales, block chords, etc.—can be discovered in the earlier masters and the early 19th century feature, the new type of melody, can be found in the same place. Bach touched this note in the theme of the fugue in *E♭* minor, No. 8 in the first book of the "48."

EX. 1.

Andante.



Ex. 2 from Beethoven's 9th Symphony also illustrates this point.

EX. 2.

Andante moderato.



(See also the Arioso dolente from Beethoven's Sonata, Op. 110.)

Mr. Gray quotes a theme (Ex. 3) which he considers the seed from which many of Chopin's melodies have grown. One can concede that the theme of the mazurka, Op. 41, No. 2 in E minor, the 2nd theme of the mazurka, Op. 50, No. 2 in A \flat major, and possibly the melody of the study Op. 25, No. 11 in A minor, bear a remote resemblance to this melody, but one wishes that Mr. Gray could have illustrated this point by definite examples before making such a dogmatic assertion. The melody given from the Brahms A minor trio for clarinet, 'cello and piano,

EX. 4

BRAHMS.



which is supposed to show the debt of Brahms to Bellini,

EX. 3.



could claim descent quite as well from Beethoven (the minuetto to the Sonata Op. 10, No. 3)

EX. 5

BEETHOVEN.



as from Bellini.

"Col mio stile devo vomitare sangue," remarked Bellini. The composition of music may be one per cent. inspiration and ninety-nine per cent. perspiration, but the fact that Bellini worked hard is, unfortunately for him and Mr. Gray, no criterion as to the quality of his music.

Mr. Gray also rejects the reproach against Bellini that his harmonies are bare and banal. His justification is that the harmonies are the best that can be found for the melodies. I do not intend to argue about the quality of the melodies, as this always seems to me a subject about which argument is useless. One either thinks a melody is good or bad; argument does not convince. The melodies of Bellini are certainly long-winded, but this is not necessarily a virtue. But one might argue in Mr. Gray's strain that because the harmony put to many a modern ballad is the best suited to it, and this is probably true, that therefore these ballads should be considered as great music.

I contend that Mr. Gray still has his case to make; I shall be interested in his reply.—Yours, etc.,

STANLEY BURR-WHYBROW.

NEW MUSIC

SONGS

Publishers names are abbreviated thus:—[Aug]ener, [Ch]ester, [Cu]rwen,
[O.U.P.] Oxford University Press, [Pa]xton, [W.R.] Winthrop Rogers,
[Y.B.P.] Year Book Press.

As Vaughan-Williams is the idol of the moment, we had better prove our orthodoxy by taking him first. There are two sets of his songs [O.U.P.]. The first consists of four settings of poems by Fredegond Shove. They are all distinguished, but No. 1 is too amorphous to please most people. It is entitled "Motion and Stillness," but seems to possess the qualities of stillness without motion. The second set—"Four Nights"—is so like a caricature of the composer's style by some mischievous student as to be laughable. All the mannerisms are there, consecutive fifths and triads and the rest. No. 3, "The Ghost," begins in the best unaccompanied manner so popular nowadays, but when the piano does make one of the party, the song creates a certain atmosphere which, without exactly making one's flesh creep, is certainly mysterious and disquieting. The last song, "The Water Wheel," is much the best of the four, but none of them are quite worthy of the composer's great reputation.

The other set is inspired by three poems of Walt Whitman, and is very noteworthy. The second, "A Clear Midnight," is really a great song. Everybody will notice a superficial resemblance to Purcell's "When I am laid in earth." Both are founded on a ground bass, and both move slowly, but there the likeness ends. Vaughan-Williams has invented his own technique, and it is in this song and similar works (such as the third of the three Welsh Choral Preludes for the organ) that we see it at its best. The other two songs are good examples, as we have said, of the composer's peculiar genius, but whereas they might have been written by a brilliant pupil, the second is obviously the work of the master.

Seven poems by Hardy, set to music by H. J. Foss, have been sent for review, and so we propose to review them, and the Oxford University Press has only itself to blame if it receives annoyance from any remarks we may make. Briefly, in our opinion, they are dismal examples of the sort of splashing about with notes which some of our youngsters call composing. The critic who simply says a thing

is bad and cannot give reasons is a being abhorrent to us. But referring to these works one hardly knows where to start a more detailed criticism. We will take the first song. The composer adopts the irritating modern method of writing the same thing in every bar for a whole page. This is an easy way to compose. Then we notice the voice makes its appearance in the fifth bar, when it could better have done so in the second or third. Again, Mr. Foss appears to have no sense of the sonorities of the piano, *e.g.*, notice the distance apart of the right and left hands (p. 2, bar 9, *eqq.*). Also the voice part appears to have nothing to do with the declamation of the poem, and tends to obscure rather than clarify the somewhat complex sense and meaning of the words, whereas a good song ought to increase our understanding, *e.g.*, particularly pp. 4 and 5, where the continuity of sense is absolutely lost by the composer's tiresome attempt to expand a trivial musical idea. But with the exception of No. 5, which is pleasant, the songs are full of *clichés* which are already out of date. This would not matter so much if Mr. Foss had anything of his own to say. But he has not, and the songs are merely a pretentious and incompetent attempt at so-called modernism.

From Augener's come two songs by Frank Bridge, "Day after day" and "Speak to me, my love." Of course they are well written, and of course they have distinction, but they lack the power to convince. "Santa Chiara," by John Ireland, is up to his high standard, and its dramatic qualities offer great scope to an intelligent singer, but several songs by D. M. Stewart we find commonplace. Far better is "Where go the ships," by Eric H. Thiman.

Two songs by Arthur Bliss, "The Bluebell" and "The Hare" [Cu.] are typical of the composer. One likes them if one likes this sort of jumpy, epileptic style, but one prefers the welcome and unaffected simplicity of Master Shaw's "Old Xmas."

For the four poems by Daniel Ruyneman [Ch.] we cannot profess admiration. The printing, without stave lines or brackets or clefs, seems affectation. Nor are there bar-lines, a common modern practice which makes it a matter of difficulty to follow the rhythmic shape of the various phrases. Both mentally and emotionally music is dull. It is very difficult and, generally speaking, quite up to date in other ways, which, as the songs were composed in 1923, shows Mr. Ruyneman to be something of a seer. The poems are from "Alcools," by G. Apollinaire.

Chester also sent us the final song by Don Quixote from "Master Peter's Puppet Show," by Manuel de Falla. How delicious it is to get a *jeu d'esprit* like this. The gaiety! the light touch! Gorgeous!

Gebethner & Wolf, of Warsaw, publish a fascinating work, "Le Songe," by Ludomir Rozycki, with Polish, French and German words.

Also six melodies by S. Zymanowski, which are rather awkward to play and sing, but well worth the trouble.

The Oxford University Press print several songs by Mr. Van Dieren. There is a "precious" atmosphere about their get-up we find annoying. For example, the picture on the covers of Mr. Van Dieren (presumably) coyly looking through a laurel-wreath is apt to cause amusement instead of the awe which surely was intended. And it is this atmosphere of "awe" which we object to when considering the works of this writer. There is no reason why we should accept Mr. Van Dieren as a great composer on the authority of a small worshipping clique. He has yet to prove to us that his style has any really personal element in it. He seems to us to lack certainty in his touch. He has not the sureness and inevitability of the great master. One can trace very much the influence of Delius in his music (and there seems to be a great deal of the amateur about Delius too). "Balow" is an instance of this. Also we do not consider his accompaniments good piano writing (e.g., p. 3, bottom line, of the setting of De Quincey's Rhapsody, unless with the printer we call it *fauphda*). Such writing may look well to the eye but conveys nothing to the ear when played on the piano. Then there is this silly business of no bar lines again. All music is capable, generally speaking, of being divided into three or two-time or their multiples. The old masters knew this and invented the bar line, which helps the eye. Who is Mr. Van Dieren to know better? The best song is "Weep you no more, sad fountains," but it is only fair to add, for the guidance of the amateur, that the music of all these compositions is very difficult both to read, play and sing.

PIANO WORKS

In John Ireland, "April" and "Burgomask," we have a composer who is always sane and always logical. Add to this the qualities of sincerity and impeccable technique, and what is better than all, an inspired melodic sense. The piano writing in "April" is delicious, and the theme on which "Burgomask" [both Aug.] is founded is the jolliest tune imaginable. We very much welcome this note of geniality in Mr. Ireland's music. He goes from strength to strength. "The Hedgerow," by Frank Bridge, we can also unreservedly recommend. This is Bridge at his best, and no one can play this delightful little work, like the chattering of birds, without thanking his stars that there are still some composers left who do not mistake the *outré* and *bizarre* for Heaven-sent originality. Mr. Arthur Bliss

seems to do this, judging by his "Two Interludes" [Ch.]. They are smart and neat, but like Hans Andersen's elf-maidens, hollow behind.

Mr. John Foulds' "Eddies" [Pa.] is effective, and also a good piano study, and from the myriads of slighter pieces sent, we pick out for especial mention George Henschel's gratifying caprice "Les Poules," and "Episodes à la Cour" seen through the clever eyes of Eduard Poldini. Both these are published by Augener.

ORGAN MUSIC

The compositions for the king of instruments submitted to us leads one to believe that there is undoubtedly a republican trend and tendency in the world of music. The Royalist party consists almost wholly of die-hards. This is the more extraordinary as in our view there is no instrument better fitted to exploit modern tendencies than the organ. It can bellow and it can wheedle. It is admittedly fitted to imitate storms at sea and goats in Shropshire. The latter effect is best produced by a stop somewhat bitterly called *Vox Humana*. But quite seriously in our mind there is no doubt that in the future composers will more and more turn their attention to the resources for kicking up blazes that the modern organ contains.

But the music sent to us for review is mostly of a mild and conventional character. It is what I believe is termed "Capellmeister music," that is to say, the sort of music our young bloods sneer at but which betrays a skill in counterpoint and design which is far beyond their powers. I should like to watch Mr. A or Mr. B trying to write a Fugue as good as that in F minor by Alan Gray [Aug.]. It begins in as dignified a way as any minor canon would wish, but later on becomes quite exciting—in fact, almost frenzied. In spite of this it is not hard to play. It only remains to say that the social amenities are observed and the Fugue is properly introduced. From the same firm come arrangements by Oliver Icing of two of Coleridge-Taylor's Valses—but we do not like the organ when it valse. Three works published by Paxton are, we are informed, suitable for the church, the concert hall or the cinema. An Introduction, Variations and Fugue on an air composed for some church bells in Dorset, is by Dr. C. W. Pearce, a skilful and sound writer. If this is suitable for a cinema so is Bach. The second is a "Marche Funèbre et Hymne Angélique" by Hugh Blair. Our knowledge of the French tongue leads us to conclude that this is a Funeral March and Angelical Hymn, and is therefore better suited to the church. It is a good example of its type, and curiously enough contains no seraphic arpeggi. The third work is a Compline and canon-scherzo by J. Stuart Archer, who also

contributes Six Choral Preludes published by the same firm. Stuart Archer is a good writer for his instrument, and one always feels safe in buying something by him. These excellent Choral Preludes, though not well suited to the cinema, will be found particularly useful to the church organist who likes to be considered a good improviser.

CHORAL MUSIC

Most of the Choral Music sent to us seems to consist of "School Songs." To most old public school-boys the title "School Song" brings memories of some purely local Carmen, generally in Latin, which they were made to sing at prize-givings and similar functions. But these are songs for schools, a different matter, and it is a very agreeable thing to know what nests of singing birds we are now sheltering in our midst. That any of the staff on the schools concerned, with the exception of the music-master, share this view is unlikely, but this is by the way. Of the dozens of songs that have been sent us we prefer "Whither go the swallows," "The Morris Dance" and "Robin Hood and Little John," all by the capable Gerrard Williams. Also "The Muffin Man," by G. Alec. Rowley, which is written for one part only [all W.R.]. A song equally suitable for schools is the arrangement of the "Lincolnshire Poacher," by Alfred Moffat [Aug.].

For those of riper years we can strongly recommend two ingenious arrangements by Charles Wood. The first is concerned with "Come, Lassies and Lads," and is for S.A.T.B., and the second gambols round about the tune of "The girl I left behind me," and is an essentially hearty service of song for men only [both Y.B.P.].

J. Fischer & Brother, New York, publish a *Missa Festiva*, by Nicola A. Montani. It is music which, without being exactly inspired from the heights, is very competent, and should be effective in its somewhat luxuriant way. It only remains to call attention once more to Dr. Whittaker's editions of the Bach Cantatas and Motets [O.U.P.]. They are clearly printed, will remain open where and when desired, and the covers bring joy to the heart.

C. W.

NEW MUSIC FOR STRINGS

The Oxford University Press publishes some beautiful and some interesting music. The beautiful music consists in the main of transcriptions and arrangements from the works of Bach. The interesting music is represented by a Sonata (No. 2) for music and

pianoforte, a Trio (No. 2) for violin, violoncello and pianoforte, and a Sonata (No. 2) for violoncello and pianoforte, by the Dutch musician, M. Willem Pijper. This is music of the new order, often arrhythmic, flaunting discords, as certain novelists flaunt sex problems, yet interesting as a crossword puzzle or any other riddle. Ingenuity is needed to find out the logical construction of the harmonies employed; still more, to fit in the 5-4 of the piano to the 4-4 and 3-4 of the string instrument. The greatest puzzle of all is the mind of the man who submits this music, believing, no doubt sincerely, that his true intent is all for our delight. He strains every resource, he employs every available trick (*sordino*, *col legno*, harmonics, &c.) till he gives the impression of music decked out in all the finery the world has ever produced. Through it all it is possible to find a musicianly temperament. But the composer has accepted the fashions of the day and that is surely a sign of weakness. The true composer does not accept but impose the fashion. To turn to Bach after reading M. Pijper is like arriving into the fresh air after a visit to a cave. And the various arrangements issued by the Oxford University Press are all luminous examples of his work. The new publications consist of five works: *Sinfonia to Church Cantata No. 42* and *Concerto from Church Cantata No. 152*, edited by Dr. W. G. Whittaker; *Prelude from English Suite No. 5*, arranged by Mr. Gerrard Williams; the "Giant" Fugue transcribed for string orchestra, by Dr. Vaughan-Williams and Mr. Arnold Foster; *Concerto for violin in G minor* arranged by Mr. J. Bernard Jackson. All these form part of the Oxford Orchestral Series, edited by Dr. Whittaker. Generally speaking, the editors have done their work ably, avoiding the lure of adventure and relying mainly on strings. Dr. Whittaker gives us a substitute for flute, oboe, viola d'amore and viola da gamba in violins, violas and 'cello in the Concerto, and suggests two solo violins and a solo 'cello instead of oboe 1st and 2nd and bassoon, while Mr. Gerrard Williams, although writing the full score for flute, oboe, clarinet, bassoon, trumpet and strings, has "cued in" the wind parts, so that the prelude can be played equally well by string orchestra. Only in one respect we feel some misgivings. In his preface Dr. Whittaker says that Bach would strengthen the harmony considerably with the organ, and accordingly a MSS. continuo part may be hired from the publishers. This, to our thinking, is far too important a matter to be left to the caprice of the performer. The question of the continuo should be decided once for all. Is it to be the organ as Dr. Whittaker suggests, or the harpsichord as Mr. Bernard Jackson maintains? If we accept the organ then the continuo ought to be written out with detailed directions for the player, for it is possible for the injudicious to spoil completely the effect of the performance by the use of the wrong stop or by want of discretion. Dr. Whittaker.

as editor in chief, ought at least see that a uniform policy is adopted in the edition for which he is responsible.

From Messrs. Augener we have a Phantasy for violin and piano by Miss Dorothy Howell, and a Lyric Sonata for violin and piano by Mr. Ernest Austin. Both are pleasant if somewhat undistinguished works. The same publishers have reprinted the three quartets of Schumann and the D major quartet of Mendelssohn, which are now available for the first time—speaking under correction—in an English edition. The type is as clear as Peters' and clearer than Litolf's. As it is never too soon to begin the practice of chamber music, we note with pleasure the issue from the same publishers of an easy Sonata for violin and piano by M. Alois Schmitt, and of Five Easy Trios by Mr. Adam Carse.

The score of Dr. Vaughan Williams' "The Lark Ascending" (romance for violin and orchestra), is published by the Oxford University Press (15s.). Its interest, as a score, lies in the exceedingly able and thoughtful arrangement of the orchestra, which can be constituted by two different groups of instruments. The full score employs two flutes, one oboe, two clarinets, two bassoons, two horns, triangle and, of course, strings. The "cued in" score employs half the wood and a limited number of strings. Dr. Vaughan Williams is as much a master of colour as of design. But whether we feel the charm of these delicate fancies or miss the blare and brightness of perhaps more robust but certainly less refined minds, there is no questioning the fact that his orchestral colour is an individual quality. It is perhaps natural that in a composition of a quasi-pastoral character the orchestra should dispense with heavy brass instruments. But we are inclined to think that the composer's inborn sense of fitness and proportion is responsible for it rather than the choice of theme. The power of penetration of violin tone has its limits. Beethoven's orchestration has often been reviled, and not without reason, for it has almost as many weaknesses as it has excellences. But in the violin concerto the orchestration is a pattern of balance. Dr. Vaughan Williams' is even more reticent.

F. B.

As space is limited it is proposed to discuss new music and new books on music in alternate issues. Thus the latter will appear in the July and the former in September next, as the publications of the preceding half-year, not quarter.

REGISTER OF BOOKS ON MUSIC

THE following list contains a selection of the books on music that have been published since the compilation of the list printed in the last number of MUSIC AND LETTERS. The place of publication has not been added to the publisher's name if the former is the capital of the country or the latter is very well known. The date of publication, unless otherwise stated, is 1926. All prices quoted are net. In the case of foreign books the price mentioned is that at which the cheapest edition can be purchased in the country in which the book is published. At the present rates of exchange £1 is roughly equivalent to 130 French francs (fr.); to 25 Swiss francs (Fr.); to 20 German marks (M.); to 190 Italian lire (L.) to 12 Dutch florins (fl.); and to 35 Spanish pesetas (ptas.).

Aesthetics. Hadow, Sir W. H.: *A Comparison of Music and Poetry*. The Henry Sidgwick Lecture, 1925. pp. 41. University Press: Cambridge. 7/6.

Appreciation. Dickinson, E.: *The Spirit of Music: how to find it and how to share it*. pp. xxi. 219. Scribners. 7/6.

Arabian Music. Farmer, H. G.: *Arabic Musical Manuscripts in the Bodleian Library*. A descriptive catalogue, with illustrations of musical instruments, etc. pp. 18. William Reeves. 1925. 8/0. [An offprint from the "Journal of the Asiatic Society," Pt. 4, 1925.]

Austrian Music. See under Vienna.

Bach. Bruyck, C. van: *Technische und ästhetische Analysen des wohltemperierten Klaviers*. [3rd ed.] pp. iv. 185. Breitkopf. 1925. 3 M.

Forkel, J. N.: *Ueber Johann Sebastian Bachs Leben, Kunst und Kunstwerke*. Nach der Originalausgabe von 1802 neu herausgegeben mit Einleitung und ausführlichem Nachwort von Josef M. Müller-Blattau. pp. 112. Bärenreiter-Verlag: Augsburg. 1925. 4 M.

Haselungen, P.: *Johann Sebastian Bach als Sänger und Musiker des Evangeliums und der lutherischen Reformation*. Skizzen. 2-4 Auflage. pp. 163. Evangelische Buchhandlung: Emmishofen. 1925. 4 M.

Jöde, P.: *Die Kunst Bachs, dargestellt an seinen Inventionen*, "um darneben einen starken Vorschmack von der Komposition zu überkommen." pp. 224. G. Kallmeyer: Wolfenbüttel. 6 M. 50.

Terry, C. Sanford: *Bach—the Cantatas and Oratorios*. 2 Bks. Milford. 1925 [1926]. 1/6 each. ["The Musical Pilgrim."]

Terry, C. S.: *Bach—the Passions*. 2 Bks. Milford. 1926. 1/6 each. ["The Musical Pilgrim."]

Beethoven. *Beethoven's Letters*. With explanatory notes by Dr. A. C. Kallischer. Translated with preface by J. S. Shedlock. Selected and edited by A. Englefield-Hull. illus. pp. xvi. 410. Dent. 10s. 6d. [A selection from the two-volume edition issued by the same publishers in 1909.]

Kerst, P.: *Beethoven, the Man and the Artist revealed in his own words*. Compiled and annotated by Friedrich Kerst. pp. 110. Geoffrey Bles. 5/- [A reissue of the edition published by Gay and Bird in 1906. The present publisher has neglected to indicate that the work was translated and provided with additional notes by H. E. Krehbiel.]

Bibliography. *The Subject Index to Periodicals*, 1922. Issued by the Library Association. II. Music. 26 columns. Grafton & Co. 1925. [This index is so useful and so admirably compiled that it seems rather like looking a gift horse in the mouth to complain of the lateness of its appearance. But if the musical periodicals are examined regularly by a special indexer as soon as they appear, which seems the only sensible plan, there seems no reason why the work should not be ready a few months after the completion of each year.]

Breitkopf and Hartel. Hitzig, W.: *Katalog des Archives von Breitkopf und Hartel in Leipzig*. II. Briefe-Autographie von Persönlichkeiten die vor 1770 geboren sind. pp. vi. 50. Breitkopf. 4 M.

Broadcasting. See under Appreciation.

Bulow. Bulow, M. von: *Hans von Bulow in Leben und Wort*. illus. pp. 298. J. Engelhorn's Nachfolger: Stuttgart, 1925. 7 M.

Busoni. See under Opera.

Calendars. *Notishalendar für Musiker und Musikfreunde.* Offizielles Jahrbuch des österreichischen Musikerverbandes. Neue Folge. Jahrg. 2. pp. v. 88. 192. M. Perles: Vienna. 1 M. 90.

Süddeutscher Musiker-Kalender. Herausgegeben vom Süddeutschen Musiker-Verband. pp. 109. Süddeutsche Musiker-Zeitung: Aalen, 1925. 80 pf.

Thoughts on Music. A calendar selected and arranged by Hervey Elwes. pp. vi. 215. "The Gramophone." 1925. 6/-.

Choirs. Newton, J.: *Don'ts for Choirmen*. pp. 34. Heffer: Cambridge, 1925. 6d.

Chopin. Bidou, H.: *Chopin*. pp. 244. F. Alcan. 1925. 10 fr. [Les Maitres de la musique.]

Church Music. Blume, F.: *Das monodische Prinzip in der protestantischen Kirchenmusik*. [With an appendix of music.] pp. iii. 157. 48. Breitkopf. 1925. 6 M.

Colour Music. Laszlo, A.: *Die Farblichmusik*. illus. pp. xii. 74. Breitkopf. 1925. 15 M.

Composition. Haba, A.: *Von der Psychologie der musikalischen Gestaltung.* Gesetzmässigkeit der Tonbewegung und Grundlagen eines neuen Musikstils. [Trans. from the Hungarian by J. Löwenbach.] pp. 56. Universal-Edition: Vienna. 1925. 2 M. 50.

Concerts. Meyer, K.: *Das Konzert.* Ein Führer durch die Geschichte des Musizierens in Bildern und Melodien. illus. pp. 166. J. Engelhorn's Nachfolger: Stuttgart, 1925. 13 M.

Conducting. Böttcher, G.: *Die Aufgaben des Männerchor-Dirigenten.* Ein Beitrag zur Hebung des Männerchorgesangs. pp. 90. C. Merseburger: Leipzig. 1 M. 50.

Weissmann, A.: *Der Dirigent im 20. Jahrhundert*. illus. pp. 198. Propyläen-Verlag: Berlin, 1925. 6 M.

Cornelius. Cornelius, C. M.: *Peter Cornelius, der Wort- und Tondichter.* 2 vol. G. Boese: Regensburg, 1925. 8 M. [Band 46 and 47 of the "Deutsche Musikbücherei"]

Criticism. Boschot, A.: *Chez les musiciens.* 3e série. Librairie Plon. 30 fr. [The first series was published in 1922 and the second in 1924.]

Hadow. Sir W. H.: *Studies in Modern Music.* 11th impression.

Pocket edition. 2 vols. Seeley, Service & Co. 1926. 5/- each. [Vol. 1 was first published in 1922 and vol. 2 in 1925.]

Debussy. Gysi, F.: *Claude Debussy*. pp. 28. Hug & Co.: Zürich. 3 M. 90. [The 114th "Neujahrsblatt" of the Allgemeine Musikgesellschaft in Zürich.]

Dictionaries. Baglefield-Hull, A.: *Das neue Musik-Lexicon.* Bearbeitet von Alfred Einstein. Pts. 11 and 12 [pp. 609-729, xxv.]. M. Hesse: Berlin. 1 M. 75 the part. [The concluding parts. The first was recorded in the Register for Jan. last.]

Favilli, E.: *Il piccolo Fels.* Dizionario biografico dei musicisti e dei principali fabbricanti di strumenti, dalle origini legendarie della musica ai tempi moderni. [2nd ed.] pp. 596. C. Tarantola: Piacenza, 1925. 12 L.

Frank, P. [i.e. C. Merseburger]: *Taschenbuchlein des Musikers.* [28th ed., revised and enlarged by W. Altmann.] pp. 152. C. Merseburger: Leipzig, 1925. 1 M. 90. [A dictionary of musical terms, with an outline of musical theory.]

Durand et fils. Durand, J.: *Quelques souvenirs d'un éditeur de musique.* 2e série (1910-1924). pp. 161. Durand. 7 fr. 50. [The first series, published in 1924, was noted in the Register for April, 1925.]

Ear Training. See under Harmony.

Faure. Bruneau, A.: *La Vie et les œuvres de Gabriel Faure.* E. Paquellé. 1925. 5 fr.

Folk Music. Palau-Boix, M.: *Elementos folhloricos de la musica valenciana.* Estudio sobre las canciones y danzas populares, etc. pp. 24. Tipografía Moderna: Valencia, 1925.

Schäfer, M.: *Volkslieder aus dem Kinzigtal.* Aus der Volksmunde gesammelt, mit den zwei-beziehungsweise dreistimmigen Weisen aufgezeichnet und mit erläuternden Anmerkungen herausgegeben. pp. viii. 116. N. G. Elwert'sche Verh.: Marburg, 1925. 2 M.

Wirth, A.: *Anhaltische Volkslieder mit Bildern und Weisen.* illus. pp. 116. C. Dünhaupt: Dessau, 1925. 2 M. 50.

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history of chamber music.]
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Wagner. Newman, E.: *Wagner as Man and Artist*. [2nd English ed.] pp. xv. 399. John Lane. 1925. 12/6. [First published in 1914.]

Zelter. Klippenberg, K., ed.: *Zeller auf Reisen. Briefe Friedrich Zelters an Goethe*. pp. 96. Insel-Verlag Leipzig. 1 M. C.B.O.

GRAMOPHONE RECORDS OF THE QUARTER

This list is representative, not complete. H.M.V.—The Gramophone Company.
Col.—Columbia; Voc.—Vocalion.

These pianoforte records give the reviewer pleasure only on the "Apollo, Super IV" gramophone. On this machine, and with a soft-tone needle (steel), they afford satisfactory reproductions of piano playing.

Choral Music.—Bax: *Mater ora Filium* (H.M.V. 1044/5). An important example of the choral music of to-day, in which a recovery is made of pre-Handelian methods, while yet without losing the distinctively "modern" methods. The work was produced at the Leeds Festival in 1935; the present records were made by the Festival Choir. Altogether, the records are perfectly successful, and both the music and the remarkable technique of the singers can be observed to the full. On the reverse of disc 1045 is Purcell's *Soul of the World*, from his St. Cecilia ode (text by Nicholas Brady); the music is a fine example of Purcell's choral writing.

Palestrina: *Confitebor tibi* and *Bonum est* (Parlophone R 20002). Viadana: *Exultate justi*; and Luca Marenzio: *O rex gloria* (Parlophone R 20005). These are representative pieces of the pure choral music of the 16th century. They are sung in the approved Italian way by the Sistine Vatican Choir. Perhaps the better record for music-lovers not intimately acquainted with ancient music is the Parlophone R 20004, which contains Palestrina's *Tribulationes* (sublime music, giving us the very voice of the composer, and beautifully recorded) and Marenzio's *Estote fortes*.

The Irmeler Ladies' Madrigal Choir—a leading solo voice, with choral accompaniment, and parts for piano, cello, violin, etc. The singing is highly expressive and the tone exceptionally pure. Parlophone E 10268 (Schubert: *Lullaby*; Mendelssohn: *Evening Star*); E 10267 (Mendelssohn: *I would that my love, and Greetings*); E 10374 (Bach: *Come, sweet Death*; Mozart: *Lullaby*).

Solo Songs.—Polydor records (Alfred Imhof, New Oxford St.) 65596: "Wie aus der Ferne" from *The Flying*

Dutchman, and "Lied an den Abendstern" from *Tannhäuser*, sung by Friedrich Schorr in a voice that has a majestic firmness, and interpreted with perfect intellectual understanding. 72775: "Einsam in trüben Tagen" from *Lohengrin*, and *Sie saß mit Leide* from Verdi's *Otello*, sung by Della Reinhardt. 72835: "So sei es" from Ponchielli's *La Gioconda*, and "Nur der Schönheit" from *Tosca*, sung by Helene Wildbrunn in the manner that combines Italian simplicity of tone and technique with German feeling and easy dramatic characterisation. 72808: the seguidilla and habanera from *Carmen*, sung by Maria Olszewska with ideal abandon.

Vocalion records. A 0250: Gretchaninov: *Berceuse*; Bach: "Oh yes, just so!" from *Phaëus and Pan* (Luella Palkin). K 05205/0: scenes from the *Falstaff* of Verdi (three characters are all sung by the one singer, Roy Henderson: the records are curious, yet entirely artistic.)

H.M.V. record, B 2187: two negro songs, *Steal away to Jesus*, and *Water Boy* (Paul Robeson.)

Organ Solo.—H.M.V. C 1237: *The Lost Chord* (Gatty Sellars) and Handel's *Largo in G* (C. Whitaker Wilson). This record is mentioned for the convenience of gramophonists who want to see how successfully the problem of recording organ-tone is being solved. With a loud needle, the former of the two pieces reproduces a deafening quality of sound, and the vox humana in one of the verses is absolutely true to nature.

Piano Solo.—Polydor, 65699: Bach: *Preludes and Fugues in D and C sharp*, from the 1st book of the "48" (Wilhelm Kempff.) Brunswick, 15105: Debussy's *Minstrels* and *The Golliwog's Cake-Walk* (Godowsky). Brunswick, 15081: *Liadow's Music Box* and the

Plagera of Granados (Godowski). M.H.V. D 1058: Bach: *Partita in B flat* (Harold Samuel).

Violin Solo.—Vocalion X 9729: *Canzonetta* by Albert Sammons, and Kreisler's *Liebesfreud* (Albert Sammons). H.M.V. D B 904: Beethoven: *Romance in F* (Jacques Thibaud).

Violin with Orchestra.—Parlophone E 10883/4/5: Mozart: *Concerto in D*, No. 4 (Eile Quelling). This performance, and the recording, have been very highly eulogised by writers in the daily newspapers. Mr. Robin H. Legge said that nothing in his experience of gramophone records was so satisfactory. Mlle. Quelling is a young violinist from the Rheinland who within the past few years has won great fame in the Germanic countries. She plays with a passionate ardour, yet her tone and phrasing are classically clear, and she has a perfect understanding of musical construction. Her intonation is perfect, whatever the register. These records should be in the hands of all musicians who wish to observe the ideal interpretation of Mozart.

Vocalion A 0252/3: Bach: *Concerto in D minor*, for two violins (Adila Fachiri and Jelly d'Aranyi). The two performers are, as is well-known to concert audiences, well-companioned, and in this work their instruments are mutually inspired, so that they play in the way singers sing in duet. The 2nd and 3rd movements will most immediately please amateurs. The 1st movement may seem formless until the listener learns to observe closely the progression of the bass part.

Cello Solo.—Vocalion K 05218/9: Bach: *Sonata in D* (Howard Bliss and Stanley Chapple, pianist). The piano accompaniments have not recorded well, the tone being monotonous by

reason of the over-sharp accentuation of the strong points; but the performance as a whole is good, and the records are a meritorious addition to the supply of Bach's cello music on the gramophone. Polydore 15954: the *Second Gavotte* of Popper, and the *Am Springbrunnen* of Davidoff (Arnold Földes)—pleasant music, played in the virtuosic manner. H.M.V. B 856: Boccherini: *Sonata in A* (Madame Suggia)—the articulation of the notes, even in the very quick places, is of a machine-like exactness, and there is a noble dignity in the interpretation.

Chamber Music.—Brunswick 10159: Arensky: *Elegie*, Op. 32; Brahms: *Scherzo* (Elshuco Piano Trio). Parlophone E 10293: Schubert: *Trout Quintet*—Theme and Variations (the Mayer-Mahé Quintet).

Orchestral.—Parlophone E 10873: Gluck: *Iphigenia in Aulis* overture (Dr. Weissmann, and the Vienna Opera House Orchestra). An excellent performance, brilliantly recorded. Parlophone E 10892/3/4: the Mozart *Symphony in E flat*, No. 39 (Dr. Weissmann)—this performance is of the kind that reflects the great Mozart traditions which accumulated in Germany and Austria during the 19th century; there is constant flexibility in the strings, and the way the players release the note at the end of a phrase brings a new beauty into gramophone reproduction. H.M.V. D 572/3: Scarlatti-Tomasini: *Suite from The Good-Humoured Ladies* (Adrian C. Boult conducting)—this music, written between 1725 and 1750, and scored by a modern Italian, has the true instrumental life; the movement is rapid, but entirely clear in respect of rhythm: the performance is finely articulated, even in the heavy brass of the "Cat's Fugue," which comes in the 4th part.

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Richard Strauss. Träumerei, Op. 9, No. 4. A. Co. T 24664. An example of Strauss's earlier music. It is a pleasant reverie.

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